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A JOURNAL ABOUT BOOKS & COMMUNICATON ARTS

Chief Editor : Bhupendra Hooja *Founder Editor :* Amrik Singh *Exec. Editor :* Subodh Bhushan Gupta

Associates :
P. C. Mathur, Rakesh Hooja,
I. K. Sharma & Rima Hooja

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TAKING STOCK

—*B. H.*

At the year-end, like million others, we too sit down to count our blessings and points of strength, our misfortunes and failings, our gains and losses. Being a mini-enterprise, there is not much to boast about or mention on either side of the balance sheet.

IBC seems like a hard-pressed poor person counting his earnings at the end of a tire-some unrewarding day ! Yet, we in the IBC have been blessed with much —the care and goodwill of our numerous well-wishers, book-lovers, all avid and concerned readers and members of the academic community, who have kept the IBC flag flying, and patched it up whenever its ends got frailed and torn !

IBC might have started with the earnest backing of the New Delhi-based publishers and top-ranking creative as well as critical writers, and some other intellectuals. But now, and over the years, it has become a "readers' journal"—it reflects what our willing readers and reviewers send us as their contributions. There are numerous instances when the publishers and distributors have not favoured IBC with review copies of their latest or recent "best-sellers"; but somewhere in this vast wide land of ours, there has been an enterprising and co-operative reader-reviewer who has obliged us and the IBC fraternity. These scores and scores of entries are our blessings. They lend support to our some time faltering courage and give us new hopes of survival, whenever we are faced with heavy and burdensome odds. We are confident that IBC w ll continue as long as the interest and the concern of its readers is fresh and strong !

In fact, we have an almost surfeit of reviews and contributions pending publication. A recent quick count showed the tally to be at least one hundred, which means, even if we are starved of fresh contributions, we have enough material to serve through five or six issues. Quite a few books are with reviewers and their comments would be in, sooner or later, adding more and varied items to our stock. This is now a big challenge to us (and our supporters). We must try and add more pages of reading matter to each issue. As we have indicated and appealed recently, we need at least an amount of Rs 1000/- additional, to add four more pages to each issue. Naturally, more pages with also more money at our disposal ! We can then think of increasing our print order too, of which there is a great need.

Our stock-taking has also revealed that there are at least 100 books, if not more, which have been with our reviewers for quite some time (unreasonably long time in many cases). What pains us all the more is the lack of response, even an acknowledgement, by some of such reviewers. At least, they can return the books sent to them long ago (or in some cases picked up from here and/or those which they had specially asked for reviewing). Perhaps we can mention in passing that to some extent, it is not their "fault". They have become so important and busy, and have got themselves involved in the circuit (*vyuha-chakra*) of seminars, workshops and conferences that they have no time, inclination or energy left to do a little bit of serious writing or book reading/reviewing. They can talk wisdom, but they cannot, in some case dare not, write their words of wisdom and authoritys. Perhaps this is an indication that we are gradually growing out of the captive age of the printed/written word, once again into the magic airy weave of the spoken word, with the audio-visual and electronic media ready to absorb and simulate our emotions and imagination, our wit and intellect. (Since many "defaulters" among our rich and varied community of reviewers are on our regular mailing list, and some are likely to read this column, may, I/we publicly urge and beseech them to favour us with early and favourable compliance. Please expedite your long-awaited review, or kindly return the book (s) !)

Over recent months, because of local disruptions (in the market and in our small office) the printing of our various successive issues has been delayed, much beyond our fears or expectations. There was a time last June-July, when we were hoping that the "back-log" would be over soon and we would be able to bring out each issue of the IBC well on time. But there were serious interruptions and breakdowns, *bandhs* and curfews, including their Janata version, since August onwards—what with the spectres of Mandal and Mandir-Masjid controversies romping around ! IBC, being a small fry in the world of printing trade, has fallen back in arrears. We have been pushed back in the queue, as it were ! Having recourse to 4-5 printing units, including modern day computers, and yet facing all sorts of delays and mix-ups has not been a happy experience by any means. Perhaps, IBC has been jinxed ever since it was born Otherwise why should the founders of this brave little venture have to almost close it down ? Perhaps the jinx did not end with its shift to Jaipur. If anything, its problems have multiplied for lack of support from some quarters

And one of the problems, perhaps the main one, has been that of being cold-shouldered by some of the premier publishing houses in the country, or at best, being treated with condescension or even indifference During the early stages, IBC could well count on their support, especially financial; but that is almost totally cut out now. Publishers and distributors seem to have evolved their own special strategies and contacts or media channels to push up their sales. Perhaps a review journal of independent views and small means comes the last in their order of priorities. Yet they do not seem to realise that the kind of service an academic journal like the IBC can render and the clientele it caters for, in the long run, do help to generate an abiding interest in the growing and competitive world of books. We are not yet in a position to claim any big success, but is it not enough that, over the years, the paid subscribers' list

(*Continued on page 25*)

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A JOURNAL ABOUT BOOKS & COMMUNICATION ARTS

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The Fair That Was !

—B.H.

From all accounts and apparent signs, the recently held 15th National Book Fair at Jaipur (Dec. 29,1990 to Jan. 6, 1991) was a big success. Sponsored and supported by the Government of Rajasthan and the National Book Trust with the collaboration of the Rajasthan Pustak Vyavasaya 'Sangh, Akhil Bhratiya Hindi Prakashak Sangh, Federation of Indian Publishers, Federation of Publishers and Book-Sellers Association of India, and the Federation of Eductional Publishers, it had the backing and blessings of the high and mighty, both in state power and those in the publishing trade in north India. No wonder that more than 250 participants were there displaying and selling their wares on the stalls. (Some participants, however, complained of the high rates of charges they had to meet.) Delhi had the largest contingent, if it could be called that, with nearly 137 participants, each competing with the other in an uncertain free for all market. Rajasthan had the next highest number of 72 participants, big and small, publishers and book-sellers. There was a sprinkling of publishers from Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Bihar and West Bengal; and also about a dozen of Government Departments and semi-government agencies.

Since the whole show was organized on the pattern of a book fair, or *a mela*, during the afternoons when the mela grounds were open to the public, neavly two lakhs and more persons, mostly school children organised in their school groups, and the university academics with several library teams in search of bargains, filed through the entrance gates and thronged the pavilions and pathways; and pushed and edged each other out in front or even inside the small and often over-crowded stalls. There was not much elbow room to stand apart and look at the books which caught one's fancy. Neither the stall-holders nor the bargain-seekers were in a mood to allow for slow and easy browsing or leisurely leafing through the books. If one knew the titles or the authors, one asked for the same; or more often than not, the enterprising sales promoters and pushers would thrust some titles into your hands, and then rush to the counter, for making the bills.

A number of eateries and refreshment stalls had the gourmets make a beeline towards those more delectable wares attracting their palate. In one corner, near the round thatched hut type of *jhonpra* displaying 800 or so books available for translations and in front of the conference *pandal* where well-known writers and authors were at home to their fans and critics, there was a popular 'resort' or halting corner, the restaurant with all sort of delicious and savoury items.

But the Fair was being held under the shadows of the ever-rising price–line, especially since after the Gulf crisis and the faltering, uncertain slow, paces of the new government in New Delhi.

The State Government with its network of institutions and libraries was expected (cajoled and threatened, up to the last) to push in more funds for purchase of books by the various library committees, but there was the official adamant demand or impervious guideline that the publishers should come out with a liberal 30% discount. The deadlock remained until the end, affecting bulk purchases by official and academic institutions. Nonetheless, many participants did have a brisk sale, especially those who had academic text books or low priced children's literature. Very few stall-holders would have gone disppointed. Quite a few buyers could boast of their bargains, though it could not be "the bazar for real bargains" from both sides, as it was meant to be.

According to a representative of the co-hosts, National Book Trust, "The purpose of such book fairs is to promote reading habits among the people, to make them aware of what is being published in various languages and parts of the country and to give them a chance to browse through books and to feel them At the same time, those in the trade can interact with each other and with the buyers and take note of what others have been doing". According to another participant, "Major buyers at such Fairs are the libraries which have been fighting shy this time. Otherwise, book fairs are for publicity and sales promotion." Yet another justified the holding of Book Fairs in spite of not very high sales, because of "other important considerations of bringing the writers, publishers, distributors, book-sellers and buyers closer to each other".

The general complaint, however, was about the high costs of books which kept buyers at bay. The choice was also not varied or colourful, because of the limited target groups—of children, students and teachers. There was not much for the common citizen.

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A JOURNAL ABOUT BOOKS & COMMUNICATION ARTS

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EXTRACTS FROM A MARTYR'S NOTE-BOOK

What would we have done, you and I, if we were young, but locked up in a condemned prisoner's cell, not knowing when the end would come? How would we have passed the p riod of suspense and the long hours of incarceration, in solitary confinement, measuring each last breath? The ordeal might have been less painful with a dedication and commitment to some cause, and an unbroken will to be ready for the supreme sacrifice, to keep one alive and hopeful, and brave comp nions, fellow prisoners and others, to share our suffering?

Such could have been the stage and the setting in which Bhagat Singh and his companions would have lived during those momentous days of September, 1929, to March, 1931. This March, the nation paid its grateful homage to the memory of those young martyrs and thousands like them, on the occasion of the 61st anniversary of the day when the three—Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru—mounted the gallows with the dreams of and the hopes of a freedom (that would one day be fulfilled) in their breasts, and slogans *Inquilab Zindabad* on their lips.

INQUILAB ZINDABAD

It is now accepted by one and all that Bhagat Singh was no ordinary rebel or a terrorist. He was a revolutionary, a republican and among the first ranks of Indian socialists. Such a portrait of Bhagat Singh emerges from the varied notes of his readings in the prison cell, which he entered in an ordinary school-type of copy-book. [Photostat copies of the same came to our notice sometime last year. By a further coincidence, we have also seen a typed version of these notes copied out from some records in Moscow/USSR, which a visiting Indian scholar had come across. The two texts tallied, giving credence and authenticity to these notes. Perhaps the first copy of these notes was made by Abhay Kumar Singh, nephew of Shaheed Bhagat Singh].

These notes are, as if it were, mirrors of the mind of Bhagat Singh He must have done a lot of introspection and self-talk, in those lonely hours; but he has left us no record of that These notes, however, reveal what he was reading in the prison cell—the books to which he had access or which he must have applied for under the jail regulations. These readings and other occasional jottings do reflect the working of his mind, his interests and concerns.

TWO DATES

There are only two dates to go by. One—September 12, 1929, on the first flap of the note-book, with some Jail official's notings and initials: "For Bhagat Singh, four hundred and four pages (404 pages) . . . *initials*". There is also a corresponding entry at the end of the note-book with Bhagat Singh's signatures, obviously to acknowledge (under the Jail Manual) that the note-book had been given to him Then on sheets nos. 65 and 67 are two significant dated entries, with the signatures of B. K. Datta and the date 12.7.1930. (On page 65, there is also a quotation from Karl Marx —*Manifesto* . . . "Law, morality, religion are to him (the working man) so many bourgeois prejudices behind which lurk in ambush just as many bourgeois interests . . " The entry on page 67 (signature of B.K. Dutta) also adds, "Autograph of Mr. B.K. Dutt/taken on 12th July, 30/in Cell no. 137/Central Jail, Lahore/ four days before his final/departure from the Jail. — *Bhagat Singh*". This is about all!

From these and other entries or extracts from several books which he was reading, we do not get much inkling of what Bhagat Singh's personal feelings or emotions or his private thoughts were. His was a sensitive soul, though kept in control and calm under every stress and strain.

FOR THE GLORY OF THE CAUSE—
THE NOBLEST HAVE FALLEN

We intend to publish some of the extracts and quotations from the various books, as jotted down in this note-book. Perhaps we should start with some poems or couplets and other extracts which may have mirrored his innermost thoughts and feelings, or reflected his moods and questionings, if any. After the first score and more of sheets full of extracts from such books as '*The Origin of the Family*' by Engels etc., on pages 26 and 27, we come across Lord Tennyson's well-known poem: *The Charge of the Light Brigade*. Was that how Bhagat Singh and other members of his "Light Brigade" felt about their mission, the command to duty, their desperate charge and inevitable sacrifice

Then follow three couplets in Urdu:

Dil de tu is mizaj ka Parvardigar de
Jo gham ki gharhi ko bhi khushi se guzar de
Chherh na ai Farishte tu zikr-e gham-e Janana
Kyon yad dilate ho bhula hua afsana
Saja kar mayiate ummeed nakami ke phulon se
Kisi hamdard ne rekh di hai mere toote hue dil mein!

The entries on page 28 and 29 are more revealing

(*P. 28*) —Ah! not for idle hatred, not
for honour, fame, nor self applause,
But for the glory of the cause,
You did, what will not be forgot.
[Arthur Clough

(P. 29) The Noblest Fallen

The noblest have fallen. They were buried
obscurely in a deserted place.
No tears fall over them, . . . [V. N. Figne
. . . . . (*It is a 12-14 line piece.*) —Eds.

We end this tribute here for lack of space, but hope to bring out more extracts from Bhagat Singh's note-book in our next offering. —B.

[**Correction on page 22**: The editor of the book R. K. Trivedy, not R. K. Reddy—Ed.]

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THE MARTYR'S NOTE BOOK (II)

In March 1991, on the occasion of the 61st anniversary of the martyrdom of Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru, we offered our humble tribute to their memory by introducing Bhagat Singh's Diary—or his Note-book of studies in the prison. Continuing with the series in this of instalment of extracts, we bring to light some other poems which must have given both solace and courage to the young martyr and his compatriots in prison.

Surprisingly, the occasional jottings and notes in his prison 'diary' do not offer any glimpse or description of the prison-life, or of what went on in the minds of Bhagat Singh, his co-accused and fellow prisoners. So detached was he from his personal discomforts or sufferings that nowhere has he recorded any thought or feeling about his life in the prison, except for an occasional and infrequent reference in the shape of an extract from some piece of poetry or a similar quotation. Unless it was edited or censored at some stage, the note-book is sanitarily 'clean' and devoid of personal matters and trivia of the everyday prison life. On the other hand, when it came to his studies and copious notings from the books he was reading, he is careful, meticulous and selective, as if here was not a condemned prisoner, but a scholar preparing for some examination or research work. More of it later.

—S.H.

The first reference to his "personal feelings or innermost thoughts" is on page 11 of the Note-book, surprisingly with the recording of two stanzas from Umar Khayyam's well-known work :

Ah, my Beloved, fill the cup that clears
Today of past Regrets and future Tears—
Tomorrow ? —Why, Tomorrow I may be
Myself with Yesterday's Sev'n Thousand Years.

... .

Here with a loaf of Bread beneath the Bough
A Flask of Wine, a Book of verse—and Thou
Beside me singing in the wilderness—
And Wilderness is Paradise now.

"*Umar Khayyam*"

Needless to suggest that in the Wilderness of the prison, and the inevitable Tomorrow facing the imprisoned youth, the romantic Sufi verses of the poet assumed a different and more poignant meaning. Perhaps there could not be a more meaningful interpretation of Umar Khayyam's poetry than under a tree, in the prison compound behind high walls, with a loaf of bread in hand and a book of verse in the other! The irony is that these lines are sandwiched between tens of extracts from *The Origin of Family* by Engels and other suitable quotes.

Obviously, during those (perhaps early) prison days, poetry did give some solace, and perhaps hope, to an alive and questioning, may be restless, soul. But this is not some ordinary everyday poetry of love and romanticism that we find here. It is poetry with a revolutionary and patriotic fevour. Even when Bhagat Singh notes down some Urdu verses

Page 19 of the Note-book has a long poem (from the standard of the Note-book and other quotations) entitled *Freedom* by James Russel Powell :

Men !—Whose boast it is that ye
Come of fathers, brave and free,
If there breathe on earth a slave,
And ye truly free and brave ?
If you do not feel the chaiu
When it works a brother's pain,
And ye not base slaves indeed,
Slaves unworthy to be freed ?
Is true Freedom but to break
Fetters for our own dear sake,
And, with leathern hearts, forget
That we owe mankind a debt ?
No ! True Freedom is to share
All the chains our brothers wear,
And, with heart and hand, to be
Earnest to make others free !
They are slaves who fear to speak
For the fallen and the weak;
They are slaves who will not choose
Hatred, scoffing and abuse,
Rather than in silence shrink
From the truth they needs must think;
They are slaves who dare not be
In the right with two or three.

"*James Russell Lowell*" (*p. 189*)

On page 20, there is another gem of a stanza. [The name of the poet is not given, but this stanza is from Elegy written in a Country Churchyard by Thomas Gray. — d]

Full many a gem of purest ray serve
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Was this an aside or a talk with the self to console himself ? Did Bhagat Singh compare himself with a flower... "born to blush unseen ?"

However, a few lines down, we read about another ode to liberty.

Liberty :

Those corpses of youngmen,
Those martyrs that hang from the gibbets—
Those hearts pierced by the grey lead,
Cold and motionless as they seem, live elsewhere
With unslaughtered vitality.
They live in other youngmen, O kings !
They live in other brothers again ready to defy you !
They were purified by death—
they were taught and exalted !
Not a grave for the murder'd for freedom,
but grows seed for freedom, in its turn to bear seed:
Which the wind carry afar and re-sow, and the
rains and the snows nourish.
Not a disembodied spirit can the weapons of tyrants loos
But it stalks invincibly over the earth, whispering,
counselling, cautioning.

(From *Walt Whitman—p. 268*) [The book is not mentioned. Ed.]

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THE MARTYR'S NOTEBOOK (III)

[[In the first two instalments of extracts from the Prison Notebook of Bhagat Singh, we have reproduced some poetry pieces noted therein, for some clues to the emotional and mental make-up of the revolutionary and his colleagues during those bleak and uncertain days. But in the process, we jumped the sequence and order of entries from the beginning of the notebook.

Before we take up the threads of continuity or come up with further poetical extracts, perhaps it would be better if we go back a little and start with the first pages of the diary. (We many as well call it a "diary", though it is not one in the strict sense of the word, being devoid of any personal touch or a chronicle of feelings and experiences as such.) —*Eds*]]

× × ×

As we open the diary, and skip over the first page of some jottings (*N.B.*—On page marked 2, there is an odd entry : Land measurements :—German 20 hectares=50 acres, i.e. 1 hectare = 2½ acres) we come across the following two quotations on page marked no. 6 (though in the right-hand corner, the page has been numbered as 3 in a pencil mark) :

Page 6 (3)

Freedom from Poverty—The "freedom of property" . . . as far as the small capitalist and peasant properties are concerned, became "freedom from property."

Marriage itself remained, as before, the legally recognised form, the official cloak of prostitution....
(Siom (?) Scientific and *Utopia)*

Mental Bondage—"An eternal being created human society as it is today, and submission to 'superior' and 'authority' is imposed on the "lower" classes by divine will. "This suggestion, coming from pulpit, platform and press, has hypnotised the minds of men and proves to be one of the strongest pillars of exploitation." (Translator's Preface—*Origin of the Family*)

* * *

[It would herhaps remain a mystery as to why Bhagat Singh chose to start his self-evolved course of study in the prison with the book "*Origin of Family*". He may have had a feeling that as an activist and committed revolutionary, and as one who had earlier given up his formal studies to join and participate in the national movement, there was a big gap in his study/knowledge, which he must make good ! Or, may be he wished to sharpen his mental tools, his weapons of wit and gain some understanding of the socio-political reality around' ! —*Eds.*]]

* * *

Page 7 (4)

The Origin of the Family **by Engels**

Morgan was the first to make an attempt at introducing a logical order into the history of primeval society.

He divides it into three main epochs : (1) Savagery, (2) Barbarism, (3) Civilization

1. **SAVAGERY** re-divided into three stages :1. Lower; (2) Middle; (3) Higher.

1. **Lower Stage of Savagery** : Infancy of human race. "Living in trees. (2) Fruits, nuts and roots serving as food (3) The formation of articulated speech is the principal result of that period. (*Underlined in the Notebook—Ed*)

2. **Middle Stage** : 1. Fire discovered. 2. Fish being used as food. 3. Hunting stone implements invented. 4 Cannibalism comes into existence. (*Marginal Note* : Venison = animal flesh taken by hunting.)

3. **Higher Stage** : 1. Bow and arrow. No pottery. 2. Village Settlements. 3. Timber used for building. 4. Cloth weaved.

Bows and arrows were for the stage of savagery what the iron sword was for barbarism and the fire arm for civilisation, the weapon of supremacy.

Page 8 (5) 2. **BARBARISM** :

1. **Lower Stage** : (1) Introduction of pottery. At first wooden pots were covered with layers of earth, but afterwards earthen pots were discovered.

(2) Human races divided into two distinct classes
(i) Eastern who tamed animals and had grain;
(ii) Western who had only 'corn'.

2. **Middle Stage** :

1(a) *Western hemisphere* : i.e. in America they grew food plants, (cultivation and irrigation, and baked bricks for house-building.

(b) *Eastern* : They domesticated animals for milk and flesh. No cultivation in this stage yet.

3. **Higher Stage** : 1. Melting of iron ore. 2. Invention of letter-script and its utilisation for writing records. This stage is richer in inventions. This is the period of Greek heroes.

3. Iron ploughs are drawn by animals to grow corn on a larger scale.

4 Clearing of fotests, and iron axe and iron spade used.

5. Great attainments : (i) Improved iron tools, (ii) the bellows, (iii) handmill, (iv) Potter's wheel, (v) Preparation of oil and wine, (vi) fashioning metals, (vii) wagon chariot, (viii) ship-building, (*continued on Page 9 (6)*

(ix) Artistic Architecture, (x) Towns and forts built, (xi) Homeric Epochs and entire mythology.

With these attainments, Greeks enter the third stage the **"civilisation"**.

(*Turn to inside page, back cover*)

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THE MARTYR'S NOTEBOOK

[Here is the second instalment of excerpts from the Prison Notebook of S. Bhagat Singh. But perhaps before reopening the diary, we should make a correction/clarification about the two books mentioned in the opening sequence of the first instalment. The books from which extracts had been quoted were :

1. Socialism, Utopian and Scientific

and 2. The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State, *both by Frederick Engels.*

"[A paragraph from Page 13 (10) has already appeard in the May 1991 issue of this journal. We pick up our thread from there. --Editors.]

Page 13 (10) (*Continued*)

Govt. of India : Rt. Hon'ble Elwin S Montague, Secretary of State for India, said in the House of Commons in 1907: 'The Government of India is too wooden, too iron, two metallic, too antediluvian, to be of any use for modern purposes. The Indian Government is indefensible."

British Rule in India : Dr. Rutherford's words : "British Rule as it is carried on in India is the lowest and most immoral system of government in the world—the exploitation of one nation by another."

Liberty and English People "The English people love liberty for themselves They hate all acts of injustice, except those which they themselves commit. They are such liberty-loving people that they interfere in the Congo and cry, "Shame" to the Belgians. But they forget their heels are on the nek of India.

An Irish Author

Page 14 (11)

Mob Retaliation " Let us therefore examine how men came by the idea of punishing in this manner.

"They learn it from the Governments they live under, and retaliate the punishment they have been accustomed to behold. The heads stuck upon spikes, which remained for years upon Temple Bar, differed nothing in the horror of the scene from those carried about upon spikes at Paris; yet this was done by the English Government. It may perhaps be said that it signifies nothing to a man what is done to him after he is dead; but it signifies much to the living; it either tortures their feelings or hardens their hearts, and in either case, it instructs them how to punish when power falls into their hands

"Lay then the axe to the root, and teach Governments humanity. It is their sanguinary punishments which corrupt mankind . . . The effect of these cruel spectacles exhibited to the populace is to destroy tenderness or excite revenge, and by the base and false idea of governing men by terror instead of reason, they become precedents."

(*Rights of Man, (pp. 32) T. Paine*)*

(*Thomas Paine—English author and publicist (1737-1809) known for his significant contributions to the American War of Independence & the French Revolution —Eds.)

Page 15 (12)

Monarch and Monarchy : It was not against Louis XVI but against despotic principles of government, that the Nation revolted. The principles had not their origin in him, but in the original establishment, many centuries back, and they were become too deeply rooted to be removed. and the Augean stable of parasites and plunderers too abominably filthy to be cleaned by anything short of a complete revolution When it becomes necessary to do a thing, the whole heart and soul should go into the measure, or not attempt it . The Monarch and the Monarchy were distinct and separate things; and it was against the person or principales of the former, that the revolt commenced and the Revolution has been carried.

(*—pp. 19*)

(*Source not indicated. Could these also be extracts from Thomas Paine's The Rights of Man ? – Ed.)

Natural and Civil Rights : Man did not enter into sooiety to become worse than he was before, but to have those rights better secured. His natural rights are the foundation of all his civil rights.

Continued on last page inside back cover

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BAAT CHEET

OF THIS & THAT . . . !

EDITORS' BOOK CHAT

Some of us feel that, apart from serious academic comments on books, there should be some element of easy arm-chair conversation, as for example in the coffee house, a sort of unstructured *baat-cheet* (to borrow a term used recently by a modern Indo-English fable-writer in a different context) or as we say in the north Indian idiom—*Baat mein se Baat nikalti hai* (One topic leads to another . . . and so the conversation or the banter flows on). To create a cosy informal corner for such *baat-cheet*, we intend to run this feature on the first and the last page of IBC under this new heading. [This note was written in Jan. 1991 —B H.]

THE MANDAL REPORT

However, we have to start on a somewhat serious or sombre note, about a book, rather a report, which last year shook an entire subcontinent out of its moorings and its centuries-old sense of complacency, and nearly brought down a fairly well-established, but perhaps loud-mouthed, government, which was impatient to run along its so-called agenda of goals as set in its election manifesto.

The Mandal Commission Report, after its presentation (1980) and early consideration by the press—the fouth estate—and the highest forum of people's representation, the Parliament, lay gathering dust for nearly a decade, its confused and contradictory recommendations having perhaps been found too explosive. Normally no one would have thought of invoking the Report, especially its recommendation regarding the continuation and extension of the 'reservations', if there had been some element of political sagacity, stability or equilibrium. But there was a political party and its broad-based supportive popular platform which was gathering strength in the name of Rama, with the avowed aim or 're-building' a Rama temple at the spot believed to be the actual birth-place of Rama (Lord Vishnu in his human *avtar*). Rather than let the carpet of power slip from under its feet, the party in government sought to meet the challenge with its own *Rama Baan*—the Mandal Recommendation to extend reservations in services and in higher centres of learning in favour of the 'Other Backward Castes'.

Well, what followed is recent through tragic history. A government elected to serve its full term of five years tumbled like a pack of cards! The Indian/Hindu society was split vertically and divided not between haves and have-nots, but between the 'high' and 'low' castes. This vertical division has had a very wide and horizontal spread, in politics and in the professions, in educational institutions and training institutes, in the civil services; and may be, the virus has spread to the security services of the land.

What perhaps Manu could not have done in his prescriptions in the *Smiriti*, the Mandal Commission has done with one report which exploded on the Indian horizon like a delayed time-bomb. So much violence has been seen since, and so much blood spilled, so many youths immolated that one shudders to think of the future, because the Report or the malady it describes and its prescriptions can no longer be kept under the carpet. Actually the continued skirmishes of the caste and class war that were going on, away from public gaze in the country-side, in some of the trouble afflicted States earlier, have now reappeared in a more ghastly, bloody and violent from on the streets of our cities and towns, especially in the metropolitan cities.

When the troubles were at their height, and some of us in Jaipur were trying to keep the young tempers cool and getting ready for fire-fighting operations (Oh! how difficult it was to keep the youth under the leash!) repeated suggestions were put across that there should be serious and dispassionate discussion on the Report, its various recommendations (other than reservation quotas) and the problems or issues raised by Mandal or the GOI decision on it, while the implementation could be deferred by at least two years. However, before the discussions could start, one had to have a copy of the Report, the authentic or the original report. We looked for its copies all over Jaipur, in the State Secretariat and the University library and elsewhere. Copies were rare or said to be "in use". Of course, there were all sort of versions and commentaries available, guide-books as usual of all types, heavy in bulk or volume but short in factual contents. Ultimately, it was towards the close of October (by when, another, greater tragedy had overtaken us in the Pink City) that a rare copy was available, which was passed from hand to hand and read avidly, No, not by the University dons or affected students, nor by the politicians or the bureaucrats (many of them had no time) but by a score of 'social activists'. Slowly, as time passed and things became 'normal', that interest too lagged. The Report remains largely unread, much less discussed.

My aim to mention all this is not to re-focus attention on the tragic events which engulfed us al last year, and to re-open the psychic and physica wounds, so to say, but the limited aim has been t stress the point that copies of such an earth-shakin report have not been freely or easily available. Th pity is that there has been hardly any improvement i the situation. Even with the passage of time, and both academic as well as professional (political or journalistic) interests having been roused, and now with th Mandal Report likely to become a key issue in th forth-coming elections and future policies. (*Note : Th was written long before the recent spell of elections–B.H.*) copies of the report are as rare as ever, not only in th small towns and mofussil areas, but also in the b cities. The Report has not been subjected to scholarl and dispassionate scrutiny; nor have there been seriou and open-minded discussions in the universities an colleges or the so-called institutions of higher learnin nor has anyone cared to really educate our enlightene

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A MARTYR'S NOTEBOOK

Notes and Extracts from Books read by Shaheed Bhagat Singh during his Prison Days

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A JOURNAL ABOUT BOOKS & COMMUNICATON ARTS

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THE MARTYR'S NOTEBOOK

[Another instalment from the Notebook of Bhagat Singh indicating what he was reading in the jail.]

Page 37 (34)

Permanency of the Social Institutions

"It is one of the illusions of each generation that the social institutions in which it lives are, in some peculiar sense, "natural", unchangeable and permanent. Yet for countless thousands of years, social institutions have been successively arising, developing, decaying and becoming gradually superseded by others better adapted to contemporary needs. . . The question, then, is not whether our present civilisation will be transformed, but how it will be transformed ?

It may, by considerate adaptation, be made to pass gradually and peacefully into a new form. Or, if there is angry resistance instead of adaptation, it may crash, leaving mankind painfully to build up a new civilisation from the lower level of a stage of social chaos and disorder, in which not only the abuses but also the material, intellectual and moral gains of the previous order will have been lost."

*--P.I. Decay of Cap. Civilisation**

*[Reference not clear as source is not available. —Eds.]

Page 38 (35)

Capitalism and Commercialism :-

Rabindra Nath's address to an assembly of Japanese students :**

"You had your own industry in Japan; how scrupulously honest and true it was, you can see by its products - by their grace and strength, their conscientiousness in details where they can hardly be observed. But the tidal wave of falsehood has swept over your land from that part of the world where business is business and honesty is followed merely as the best policy. Have you never felt shame when you see the trade advertisements, not only plastering the whole town with lies and exaggerations, but invading the green fields, where the peasents do their honest labour, and to hilltops, which greet the first pure light of the morning ? . . This commercialism with its barbarity of ugly decorations is a terrible menace to all humanity, because it is setting up the ideal of power over the perfection. It is making the cult of self-seeking exult in its naked shamelessnes . . Its movements are violent, its noise is discordantly loud. It is carrying its own damnation because it is trampling into distortion . . . the humanity upon which it stands.

Page 39 (36) It is strenuously turning out money at the cost of happiness . . . The vital ambition of the present civilisation of Europe is to have the exclusive possession of the devil.

**[Occasion of this assembly and source not known.]

**[Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) Indian poet, philosopher and educationist; founded Shanti Niketan (1901) as a forerunner of Vishwa-Bharati. Awarded Nobel Prize for Literature (1913) for his collection of poems *Gitanjali.*

—Eds.]

Capitalist Society

"The foremost truth of political economy is that everyone desires to obtain individual wealth with as little sacrifice as possible."

"Nassan Senior."

*[Identity not known—Eds.]

Page 40 (37)

Karl Marx on Religion@*

Man makes religion; religion does not make man. Religion, indeed, is the self-consciousness and the self-feeling of man who either has not yet found himself, or else (have found himself) has lost himself once more. But man is not an abstract being squatting down somewhere outside the world. Man is the world of men, the state, society. This State, this society, produces religion, produce a perverted world consciousness, because they are a perverted world. Religion is the generalised theory of this world, its encyclopaedic compend, its logic in a popular form . . . The fight against religion is, therefore, a direct campaign against the world whose spiritual aroma is religion.

Page 41 (38) (*Continued from last page*)

Religion is the sight of oppressed creature, the feelings of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of unspiritual* conditions. It is the opium of the people."

The people can not be really happy until it has been deprived of illusory happiness by the abolition of religion. The demand that the people should shake itself free of illnsion as to its own condition is the demand that it should abandon a condition which needs illusion.

(*Contd. on Back Cover Inside*)

*@[Karl Heinrich Marx (1818-83) German philosopher, radical leader and chief theorist of modern Scientific Socialim. Pubiished with Frederick Engels (1820-95) fellow German philsopher the *Communist Manifesto* (1848) and actively collaborated with him in evolving the communist doctrine. Organised the First International (1864) and wrote his famons *Das Capital* (1867) Vol II & III were later (1885-95) edited by Engels. —Eds.]

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THE MARTYR'S NOTEBOOK

[Another instalment from the Prison Notebook of Bhagat Singh]

Page 45 (42)

Sir Henry Maine has said $:

"That most of the land of England has passed to its present owners by the mistake of lawyers—mistakes that in lesser criminals were punished by hanging"

$[Perhaps Sir Henry James Sumner Maine (1822-88) English historian and comparative jurist. Author of several books on Ancient Laws (1861) Village Communities in the East and the West (1871) Early History of Institutions (1875) Early Law and Custom (1883) Essays on Popular Government (1883) and International Law (1885). Also legal member of Council in India from 1863 to 1869 and Vice-Chancellor, Calcutta University. —Eds.]

"The law convicts the man or woman
Who steals the goose from of the Common,
But lets the greater felon loose
Who steals the Common from the goose."

Page 46 (43)

Democracy :

Democracy is theoretically a system of political and legal equality. But in concrete and practical operation it is false, for there can be no equality, not even in politics and before the law, so long as there is glaring inequality in economic power. So long as the ruling class owns the workers' jobs and the press and the schools of the country and all organs for the moulding and expression of public opinion; so long as it monopolise(s) all trained public functionaries and disposes of unlimited funds to influence elections, so long as the laws are made by the ruling class and the courts are presided over by members of the class; so long as lawyers are private practitioners who sell their skill to the highest bidder, and litigation is technical and costly, so long will the nominal equality before the law be a hollow mockery.

In a capitalist regime, the whole machinery of democracy operates to keep the ruling class minority in power through the sufferage of the working class majority, and when the bourgeeois govt. feels itself endangered by democratic institutions, such institutions are often crushed without compunction.

"From Marx to Lenin"
†(by Morris Hillquiet)
(p. 58)

†[Identity not clear. —Eds.]

Democracy does not secure "equal rights and a share in all political rights for everybody, to whatever class or party he may belong." (Kautsky)* It only allows free political and legal play for the existing economic inequalities. . . . Democracy under capitalism in thus not general, abstract democracy but specific bourgeois democracy, ... or as Lenin** terms it—democracy for the bourgeois.

(Source reference torn out) —*Eds.*

Page 47 (44)

Term Revolution Defined

"The conception of revolution is not to be treated in the police interpretation of the term, in the sense of an armed rising. A party would be mad that would choose the method of insurrection on principle so long as it has at its disposal different, less costly, and safer methods of action. In that sense social democracy was never revolutionary on principle. It is so only in the sense that it recognises that when it attains political power, it can not employ it for any purpose other than the abolition of the mode of production upon which the present system rests"

*"Karl Kautsky"**

---

*[Karl Johann Kautsky (1854-1938) German politician who influenced the adoption of Marxist principles in Erfurt Programme (1891) for Social Democrats. Opposed Lenin and Bolsheviks in the Second International —Eds]

**[Vladimir Ilych Lenin. orinigally Ulyovov (1870-1924) Leader of the Bolshevik Revolution and founder of the Soviet State. —Eds]

Some facts and figures about United States

5 men can produce bread for 1000
1 man produce cotton cloth for 250
1 man can produce woollens for 300
1 man can produce boots and shoes for 1000

*Iron Heel (p. 78)****

15,000,000 are living (in) abject poverty who can not even maintain their working efficiency.

3,000,000 child labourers.

***[Novel (published in 1908) by Jack (John) Griffith London (1876-1916) American novelist who, growing up in poverty, became a socialist essayist, journalist and author of about 10 books. —Eds.]

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BAAT CHEET— — EDITORS BOOKCHAT — — OF THIS & THAT

MY RECENT READINGS

Atma Ram

I often read two types of books—one which concern my profession; second, which I like and enjoy on my own In case of the first category, books change with the change of my area of work. For example, earlier I perused with great interest critical books on the authors I taught or guided research on, publications in series like Twentieth Century Views, twentieth century interpretation, case books, critical heritage, and so on.

IN THE ROUTINE OF WORK

But on taking up the new assignment of education administration (about three years ago), my field of relevant reading has included books of quotations, on education, UGC and NCERT publications, and volumes like '*A Students' Guide to 50 British Novels*, '*A Students' Guide to 50 American Novels*' (both edited by Abraham H Lass), '*100 Great Books*', and '*100 Great Modern Lives*' (both edited by John Canning). Such volumes give me what I generally (and at times hurriedly) need to think over.

There is little time to ponder over bulky books or books respectfully presented as complimentary copies, as administrators are usefully slaves of time and train. The world (packed with meetings, etc.) is literally too much with them.

But I came across some very good books on literature and education For example, '*National Policy on Education—An Appraisal*' by J C. Aggarwal, '*The Human Bonds and Bondages : Fiction of Anita Desai and Kamala Markandaya*' (1991) by Usha Pathania, '*The Dying Embers—A Novel*, (1991)' by P.C.K. Prem—and I enjoyed reading them

Mr. Aggarwal's down-to-earth approach to issues in education, Usha Pathania's psychological stance, perceptive analyses and insightful observations impressed me.

'*The Dying Embers*' concerns the life-pattern of the corrupt rich and the way their cruelty plays with the lives and happiness of others. A system is born out of the projects and schemes of a few who rule the roost. Whosoever strikes against it in a bid to renew or rejuvenate it, goes down. But, nonetheless, the struggle for a fuller life, a meaningful existence, is a worthwhile endeavour. This is what Mr. Prem seems to say with characteristic intensity, candour and conviction.

POETRY & OTHER FORMS OF WRITING

Two books of poems attracted me during the year—'*The Sandalwood Door*' (1991) by M.K.Kaw and '*The Whiff*' (1991) by Kedarnath Sharma. The former contains fine poetic "pieces" by a seasoned writer, whereas the latter includes gripping poems on day-to-day incidents/themes. '*The Whiff*' with "telling illustrated 129 pieces" on even major motifs—whifs from Himachal, predicaments, vicissitudes, the spark, Love, democrat, and for Children.

Gurmukh Singh Bedi's '*Emerging Worlds*' (1990) is an anthology of fourteen stories of great merit and appeal.

Dr. M. Mascarenhas's '*Examinations : An Informative Update*' offers viable and workable approaches to the question of examinations. His revealing observations and in-depth analysis merit attention. Practical and detailed suggestions by an expert who has also a long experience or interaction with students and the academic world.

Having a sustained interest in Dr. Anand, I try to lay my hands on anything published on the doyen of Indian writers Recently I read '*Mulk Raj Anand : The Short Story Writer*' (1991) by Dr. Vijay Mohan Sethi. Besides an updated bibliography and an excellent, exclusive interview, the volume contains eleven essays of highly analytical and illustrative nature on Anand's shorter fiction.

MY FAVOURITE READINGS

As the sounding cataract to Wordsworth, Jane Austen's novels haunt me like a passion, and I read her fiction even now, as and when I am free. My favourite however, is '*Pride and Prejudice*', and the character of abiding interest is Elizabeth Bennet. . . That is a truth universally acknowledged. I do not feel embarrassed or sad when some term me (though jokingly) as Jane Austen's man.

Books of the second category/-/read almost daily for my own pleasure, and refinement of the self are not many. Nor are these very new publications. But being different from literature of hour or those which I have to read willy-nilly, these are precious gems, sacred books which (I believe) "are to be chewed and digested". These are '*The Gita*', and '*Die to Live*' by Maharaj Charan Singh.

'*The Gita*' (available in many languages, but I prefer the one in Sanskrit) is a song celestial of a very high order. It exhorts us to do our duty, as therein all the honour lies. It teaches us how to live, how to make the best of both the worlds.

'*Die to Live*' provides the essence of spirituality in an easy and pervasive style. After a compact introduction to teaching of the saints, there are five chapters devoted to the divine design, creating the atmosphere, attending the meditation, the effect of meditation, and all by His grace. What is the gist of

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COMMONWEALTH EDUCATION MINISTERS MEET

SEARCH FOR QUALITY IN EDUCATION

BOTTOM TO TOP APPROACH

Recognising that better education makes for economically stronger countries, the Commonwealth has set for itself a programme to improve the quality of education at both the basic as well as higher levels. The eleventh Commonwealth Conference of Education Ministers, (held in Barbados from 29 October to 2 November) has suggested that the Commonwealth focus its efforts in education on these two areas, while continuing its work on educational development in small states.

And to Namibia – the Commonwealth's 50th, and newest, member – the Ministers pledged assistance on a broad front for the building of an equitable post-independent education infrastructure. This assistance would be on a bilateral basis and through the various Commonwealth schemes.

Basic Education

The Ministers endorsed the **World Declaration on Education for All** issued in Jomtien, Thailand, in March, and stressed that while recognising financial constraints, a realistic strategy to raise the quality of basic education required some redistribution of budgetary resources, the harnessing of government and community resources, and the targeting of aid to support basic education.

The role of management in implementing cost-effective measures both in individual schools as well as in the systems is crucial. The Ministers, therefore, stressed the importance of providing support and devising appropriate training for teachers and head teachers to implement these reforms. They also suggested that to underline the central role of teachers in the process of improving quality, better conditions of service should be considered. Activities in this area would be planned in partnership with regional, Commonwealth and international agencies.

Higher Education

A Commonwealth Higher Education Support Scheme (CHESS) will be established, as recommended by an Export Group, and support will be concentrated initially in the three recommended areas: (i) books, materials and libraries, (ii) improved system of management in institutions and systems of higher education; and (iii) staff development. A second CHESS planning meeting will be held in the next few months to identify sources of bilateral and multilateral assistance for CHESS programmes and discuss other operational matters.

Student Mobility

The movement of students and scholars within the Commonwealth was of continued concern to the Ministers. Patterns of movement were still stagnant, according to figures presented to the conference by the Standing Committee on Student Mobility and Higher Education Co-operation. Since the last meeting in 1987, Australia and New Zealand have also introduced **full cost fees** – the major impediment to expanding mobility – for Commonwealth students.

Ministers urged the main host countries to exercise restraint in fee setting and to give 'concrete expression' to their pledge in 1987 to consider a favourable fee regime for Commonwealth students. They requested the Secretary-General to consult with the major host countries in exploring ways of introducing a favourable fee regime for Commonwealth students, and present a report to the next Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Harare in October 1991.

While recognising the increased number of award and scholarship schemes in host countries, the Ministers felt further effort was needed to reduce the burden of overseas study through credit transfer schemes, modular course structures, links and split-site arrangements as well as distance-education programmes and facilities.

They also suggested more student flows between developing countries, and thanked Zimbabwe for offering to take more foreign students into its universities.

Distance Education

Ministers were pleased that since their endorsement of a proposal for a distance learning facility in 1987, the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) had been established and several projects are under way. *(See the next item on this page).*

In supporting measures to encourage and facilitate the flow of materials between Commanwealth countries, the Ministers asked that the feasibility of an Indian proposal to set up a materials bank should be examined.

Kenya pledged £ 50,000 to COL at the meeting. Ministers emphasised that even modest contributions from other developing countries would be a symbol of commitment.

From Commonwealth Currents Dec. 1990, Jan 1991

THE COMMONWEALTH OF LEARNING (COL) TWO YEARS OF GLOBAL ACTIVITY & FUTURE

In its two years of existence, the distance education Commonwealth of Learning (COL) has not just been busy setting up itself in Vancouver, Canada. It has also made a start on work in the Caribbean, Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and is in the process of finalising a strategic plan--incor-

Overleaf

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porating work programme as well as a financial plan – for the next three years.

In its first report to Commonwealth Ministers of Education, (in Barbados from 29 Oct - 2 Nov.) COL said that, in addition to the geographical spread of its work, it had been active in distance education matters on many levels of the education process: higher education, sub-degree programmes, technical and vocational studies, primary education, and non-formal continuing education for adults.

A planning committee, headed by COL President Dr. James Maraj, oversees work programmes; and four programme directors have responsibility for major regions: Vice-President Prof G. Ram Reddy (Asia), Dr Dennis Irvine (Caribbean, and also Material and Acquisitions), Mr Peter McMechan (Pacific, and also Continuing Professional Eduction) and Mr Hafiz Wali (Africa, and also Information Services). A fifth director, Mr John Quigley, will underpin all their work as Director of Communications and Technology.

Within the geographical spread and at the different levels of education, COL's activities have been in such areas of distance education as staff training, the exchange of educational materials, telecommunications, institutional development and information services. It has also emphasised professional education, teacher training, the environment and women in development.

COL has drawn in distance educators from all over the Commonwealth to discuss some of the challenges and problems they face. At the end of the Round Table on Training in Vancouver in April, participants had a clearer idea of the state of distance education in the Commonwealth as well as a better idea of the aims of COL. They drew up an *agenda of action* for COL and drafted course outlines in three areas – planning, administration and management; the application of new technologies; and instructional design and course development. These have been used in regional training workshops in Africa. Asia, the Caribbean and South Pacific.

A Study Fellowships Programme has also been implemented, with the help of the Government of British Columbia, to expose Fellows to innovative developments in distance education. Fellows from as far away as the Solomon Islands have visited COL since July.

Below are some of COL's activities since it began operating in January 1989 :

Staff Training: In undertaking and supporting staff training in the techniques and management of distance education, COL held the Round Table mentioned above. The subsequent regional workshops involved participants from 26 Commonwealth countries. In India, COL is supporting the work of those using distance education in training middle-level and senior public servants.

Instructional Materials: In assisting the acquisition and delivery of distance education materials and facilitating access to them, COL is encouraging the University of Swaziland to set up learning centres for business studies. COL is also active in efforts by Brunei, Darussalam, Guyana, St Lucia and Trinidad to introduce distance education.

Information: A Commonwealth of Learning Information Service (COLIS) will provide information on any aspect of distance education, including selection of appropriate technology.

The principal databases it will rely on are to be developed by the International Centre for Distance Education (ICDL) located at the British Open University. The ICDL database of distance education courses available throughout the Commonwealth now holds about 2,500 entries. Its compilers hope to have 20,000 entries by 1992.

Telecommunications: COL is working on assisting institutions in the effective use of appropriate telecommunications and educational technologies for their needs. Part of its work in Guyana is setting up audio teleconferencing systems to enable students in far flung regions to communicate with their teachers in the capital. On a larger scale, COL plans to assist Nigeria's National Teachers' Institute (NTI) to improve radio communication with its Zonal centres, and is also discussing the establishment of a small regional satellite network which will link NTI, COL and teacher education institutions in The Gambia and Sierra Leone.

Institutional Development : All COL's work contributes to institutional development, but noteworthy in this area is Bangladesh's proposal to establish an Open University. COL Vice-President, Prof G. Ram Reddy, serves as team leader on an Asian Development Bank-supported study in this connection.

Research : Among its areas of research, COL is conducting a review of the University of the South Pacific, which has been delivering distance education for over 20 years to the islands of the Pacific, at the request of the Vice-Chancellor.

A similar study is being planned for the University of the West Indies; and COL, the University of Leeds and the Indira Gandhi National Open University are jointly researching difficulties experienced by distance education students with English-language skills.

Teacher Education : COL has offered support for teacher education programmes in Jamaica, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and The Gambia, among other countries. It is also encouraging the consideration of the introduction of a distance education B. Ed course in Uganda, and is associated with efforts in India to improve the quality of B. Ed programmes at a distance.

Environment : In response to the need for materials on the ennvironment, COL has prepared a broadcast-quality video in collaboration with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation on environmental issues and potential solutions emphasising strategies for sustainable development.

Women in Development : COL has defined certain areas in which distance education may especially help women : women with families to provide for, homemakers in need of basic skills, women who have raised their families and seek a new role, and women whose advancement to high-level positions needs to be promoted.

To help define its policy directions, COL organised a meeting of women Vice-Chancellors in New Delhi in May, and their recommendations have provided the framework of COL's plans. COL reported on its progress in this area to the Meeting of Commonwealth Ministers responsible for Women's Affairs in Ottawa in early October.

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A NOVEL OF SELF – REVELATION

ANAND'S ENDURING BUBBLE *

A Review by Alastair Niven

"The Bubble", the fourth in Mulk Raj Anand's projected *"bildungsroman"* sequence of seven novels, is a revelation. Continuing the series begun in 1951 with *"Seven Summers"* and continued in more recent years with *"Morning Face"* and *"Confessions of a Lover"*, it takes the story of Krishan Chander, Anand's not so alter ego, right into the heart of Bloomsbury and the young England of the mid-twenties. Thematically, we have had a foretaste of some of its descriptions of the *"literati"* of this period in Anand's *"Conversations in Bloomsbury"*; but the material in that book is sketchy and anecdotal, *albeit* evocative, by comparison to the massive and technically adventurous achievement of *"The Bubble"*.

Anand is a neglected figure in Britain today. Indeed, he has had no new novel published here since *"Private Life of an Indian Prince"* over 30 years ago. A gradual rediscovery of his pre-eminence among Indian novelists who work in the English language may, however, be about to take place. Several British publishers are talking of re-issuing some of his books. The B.B.C. has recorded a long interview with him.

Perhaps a fortuitous consequence of the Indophilia that is sweeping Britain in the wake of the *Gandhi* film, the *"The Jewel in the Crown"* television serial, and the recent Festival of India, may lead to seeking out Indian writers on Indian subjects as well as Kipling and Paul Scott. Schools and universities, partly in response to the Indian minorities living in Britain, are beginning to look at Anand's early fiction as suitable material for the classroom. *"The Bubble"* which has now become available in Britain, can only enhance his reputation.

Experimentation with Form

The merit of this novel is its twofold experimentation with form. To the continuing debate about whether the modern novel is in a state of decline or regeneration, Anand, now in his early eighties, makes an unexpectedly challenging contribution. *"The Bubble"* is innovative, first because of the extent to which it uses documentary material actually written at the time in which the novel is set, and secondly because of its formal versatility. Both points deserve amplification. Anand has incorporated here actual diary entries, letters and records which he put down on paper nearly 60 years ago. "I must go on brooding, philosophising and writing my diary about my discoveries of myself, in the freedom I have acquired, to find out who I am and who are others. I have to read a thousand books, to go many places, and to learn from many philosophers before I can launch on the vaulting ambition to be myself."

Anand wrote these words on November 13, 1925, in a parsonage in North Wales. Attributed to Krishan, they are surely Anand's own musings on that day. They show Anand, a renowned champion of the peasant sensibility and of the underdog, in a relatively uncharacteristic mood of introspection. But that is what the *"bildungsroman"*, a relatively unused form in India but at the heart of much great European fiction, is all about.

By inter – weaving such passages into a continuous narrative of self-discovery, Anand perhaps allows us to elevate the ugly word *"faction"* which has recently been used – in the West at least – to describe much synthetic television material into a useful literary concept.

FLOWERING OF A BUD — CONTEMPORARY DOCUMENTATION

"The Bubble" is a novel of self-revelation sustained by the insights of a novelist at the very moment of establishing his intellectual and moral credentials. The result necessarily incorporates a great deal to trivia. We know the time of day, the content of meals, the colour of the furnishing, the clothes, the picutres and the chance remarks, all these loom large on the day they happen, but memory normally cuts them out. Some readers will be impatient with this, and there are certainly times when one could wish for a more stringent editorial hand. The cumulative effect, however, is of witnessing a life opening from bud to flower. There are sufficient linking of episodes, narrative interpolation and refining of facts to provide the essential artistic control which a novelist rather than an autobiographer provides. If comparisons need to be made, then they must be with Thomas Mann, Lawrence of *"Kangaroo"* and perhaps with Proust, although the publisher evokes the *Puranas* and the work of Soma Deva, author of the thousand tales.

The formal versatility of *"The Bubble"* is a consequence of this use of contemporary documentation. There may be critics who think that a novel partly composed of daily jottings, whether in letter or diary form, is bound to be scrappy. This view will surely miss the point. Anand, *albeit* with occasional lapses into repetitiousness, marries many different kinds of prose – epistolary, monologue, conversational, omniscient narrative – in a way that few other writers have attempted.

A PANORAMA OF ENGLISH SOCIAL & LITERARY LIFE IN MID – TWENTIES

The book is, therefore, not easy; it is too passionate and hectic for that, darting in different directions all the time. The reader who perseveres, however, will be rewarded with a unique panorama of English social and literary life in the twenties as perceived by an enquiring outsider tossed between patronage and rejection.

I have concentrated on the technical energies of *"The Bubble"*. Anand's eye for the quirks of human behaviour is always acute and here it observes domestic life as sharply as the political debates involving Krishna Menon and the slightly effete gossip masquerading as high art which characterised the Bloomsbury authors. Alongside the public and intellectual life goes Krishna-Anand's own voyage of self-awareness. Haunted by the memories of Yasmin back in India (the new novel has many reminders of the earlier

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* We regret that due to some unfortunate circumstances, the *MSS* of the 1988 review was misplaced by our printer. It has now been retrieved. Delay is regretted -- Editor.

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ANAND'S ENDURING BUBBLE

three in a sequence) he now enters a new sexual relationship, haunted all the time by the ghosts of family responsibilities laid upon him in his adolescence. Religion and metaphysics play as great a part in his awakening sensibility as sexuality.

At several levels, "*The Bubble*" is a major achievement. It is different in shape from anything else that Mulk Raj Anand has essayed. It opens up the possibilities of the novel at a time when many critics are saying the form is defunct, or that Indian fiction in English is marginal to Indian literature as whole. It will surely become a prime source of interest for social historians intrigued by the Anglo-Indian connection in the twenties.

Above all, it gives the lie to those of narrow vision who have decried Anand as a played-out force. "*The Bubble*" is as boldly innovative and panoramic a work of fiction as I have read in recent years, marrying an epic scale to a brooding sense of personal uncertainty.

I do not pretend that it is faultless or that there are not occasional "*longueurs*" in so bulky a work, but these limitations are almost inevitable, given Anand's concept of matching his recollective mind of 1984 with his student speculations of the 1925-27 period.

I hope that in Britain, it will be given the serious attention it merits. I eagerly await the fifth volume in this grand confessional septet.

Dr. Alastair Niven a well know British Scholar Critic and advisor, British Arts Council has made a special study of the Novels of Dr. Mulk Raj. Anand.

YOUNG SCHOLARS' SECTION :
By and for young Scholars

G. Venkataraman : JOURNEY INTO LIGHT: LIFE & SCIENCE OF C.V. RAMAN

Indian Academy of Sciences, Bangalore (1988).p.559 Rs.135.00

Comments By Renu Vyas

It is the third book by author, and second one of its kind to be published recently on Sir C.V.Raman's life, the first one being A. Jayaraman's *Chandrasekhar Venkataraman*.

The book is written not only for the scientific community, but it is also good reading for people who have some interest in Indian science. It should be of special interest to the younger generation of scientists who can take inspirations from Raman's life and work. Of course, the book contains some technical portions which can be skipped by a non-physics person.

The author has given a vivid account of Sir C.V. Raman's life, intertwined as it was with the history of science in modern India. Nature was his laboratory; and he used to draw inspiration from it.

To him, basic science and research was everything. In his days, opportunities for basic science and research were

YOUNG SCHOLARS' SECTION

practically non-existent in India. But Raman created opportunities for himself, even when he was posted in backward areas. In the initial years, Raman carried on with his job and research simultaneously, and did extremely well in both. He demonstrated his famous 'Raman Effect' experiment with the help of very simple equipment, and was very proud of it.

This can be a lesson to our scientists of today who always yearn to import costly equipment.

One anecdote is of relevance here. Once a crestfallen student expressed his worry to Prof. Raman that while he had a 1 kw lamp, his competitor abroad had a 10 kw lamp for the same experiment. Raman replied, 'Put a 10 kw brain on the problem' *(p. 460)*. Clearly there was a message in it. To him, it was the brains that produce good science rather than costly equipments.

History will probably see him as a good conscience-keeper.

Another notable point that the author has highlighted in the *Life of Raman* was that he not only faced the obstacles, but also raised himself to the international level by his own effort, 'staying in the country'. In spite of an acute paucity of funds, Raman's enthusiasm was undiminished. He also supported impoverished scholars with money from his pocket, besides looking after their meals at times. But certainly the most remarkable thing about him was that he never left the land of his birth even in the darkest hour, while today most of our scientists in spite of increased funds and facilities desire to work abroad.

The author has very aptly hit at the curse of "politics" played in scientific institutions, which eats away their vitals. The readers will be horrified to know how "the regional politics" in those days prevented Raman from creating a good scientific atmosphere in the country. Had politics not hampered him, perhaps the entire science scenario in our country would have been different today. The author must be commended for bringing out some of these facts in Raman's life which were hitherto unknown to people at large.

Our people often wonder what is wrong with our science. Why is there no parade of heroic scientists like Raman even though the facilities and funds have improved vastly ? Our present scientific community should introspect, and if possible, emulate Raman. Indian scientists today have better opportunities, but as Raman prophesized, they lack a spirit of achievement and victory. Defeatist attitudes quite prevalent among young scientists come in the way of scientific progress in India.

The author has appended a list of scientific papers of C.V. Raman, an amazing four hundred and sixty-five in number. It is very informative and inspiring. On the whole, it is a good book, particularly in organization of the material and as a very absorbing biography.

Ms. Renu Vyas is a student of B.Sc (Hons.) at the Banasthali Vidyapith, Banasthali -304022 RAJASTHAN

YOUNG SCHOLARS' SECTION is open to young scholars from all disciplines in our universities and institutions of higher learning & research. Contributions are welcome.

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MAGIC & ROMANCE OF THE INDIAN OCEAN (II)

Continued from p.24 of the August 1990, Vol. xv No.8 issue. Editor

Ashin Dasgupta and M.N.Pearson [Editors]
INDIA AND THE INDIAN OCEAN : 1500-1800

Review Article by Ashim Kumar Roy

The fourth chapter of the book, "*Indian and the Indian Ocean in the Sixteenth Century*" is by M.N.Pearson.

THE COMING OF THE PORTUGUESE

Trade Disrupted & Sovereignty Claimed

The important thing which happened in this century in the Indian Ocean was the coming of the Portuguese who circumnavigated Africa, and arrived in India in 1498. One of their first steps after coming here was to disrupt the trade of the Indian Ocean. They tried to monopolize it and to control all others who traded in the Ocean.

Until their arrival, the Ocean was free. Anybody, whether Indian or Egyptian; could trade anywhere in the Ocean. The ships paid the duties and taxes when they entered or left a port; but once on the sea, they sailed unrestricted. There were no doubt occasional pirates; but no government put any restriction on their sailings over the Ocean with their goods.

The Portuguese introduced politics in the Indian Ocean. They claimed sovereignty over it. Within a year of reaching India, their King assumed for himself the high-sounding title, "The Lord of Navigation, Conquest and Commerce of Aethiopia, Arabia, Persia and India." They obtained a Papal Bull to give religious authority for this title. In fact, for the first few years at least, they were able to enforce this claim.

It speaks a lot for the courage and tenacity of this small nation of less than 15 lac people to establish such a right thousands of miles away from their country. It is true that their ships were technically better than those of their adversaries; and they used cannons which the merchant ships they encountered did not possess. Nevertheless, they were fighting in a far away ocean, with no hope of getting any help or succour in any difficulty. Yet they stuck on. This tenacity is commendable, particularly when we know that their home base was so weak. Pearson noted in his *Portuguse in India*, that Portugal "was a poor country, with the bulk of the population suffering from disease, and mortality rates so high." As Braudel noted, "It was a country rotten to the core, an enormous deadweight of which Philip was to find himself master in 1580'." (Fernand Braudel's book from which Pearson has quoted is *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II.*)

Records Kept — Though Exaggerated

The Portuguese also kept some records of their voyages and exploits. These records exaggerate their successes and play down their failures; and we may not be getting from them a true picture of what really happended. But then, these are the only records we have of most of the 16th century. Many of these records are still available in the archives at Goa, but the bulk of them were kept in the archive in Lisbon. Other towns in Portugal also had some archives. Most of the records kept in Lisbon were destroyed after the great Lisbon earthquake of the Ist November 1755. The records that survive today in all these archives have enough material for the large number of scholarly books that are coming out now a days. But earlier, before a serious study of the archival materials began, historians had little solid facts to bite on. They depended mostly on accounts left by travellers and contemporaries. These usually exaggerated the deeds of the Portuguese. European historians of those days were out to prove the superiority of the Portuguese over the Asians.

W.W.Hunter wrote about the Portuguese exploits in the first volume of his *A History of British India (1899)* : "History, ancient or modern, records no achievement of armed commerce so rapid, so brilliant, and so fraught with lasting results." *(p.113)* and again : "Almeida's victory, off Diu on February 2, 1509 secured for Christiandom the naval supremacy in Asia, and turned the Indian Ocean for the next century into a Portuguese Sea."*(p.118)* This is almost the language of Camoens in his *Os Lusiadas*, the national epic of Portugal.

The historians of the present day take a sober view of the matter. Pearson, in the essay under discussion, thinks that the impact of the Portuguese on the trade of the Indian Ocean was very limited *(p.90)*; and the life on the sea continued much as it had been for some centuries.*(p.92)*

Defeated On Land : Albuqerque Lost To The Zamorin

In their early years on the Ocean, the Portuguese also tried to fight on the land the local rulers on the Indian coast. In most cases they failed. Most European historians do not mention these failures. For instance, the abject defeat of Albuquerque by the soldiers of the Zamorin of Calicut is usually played down by them. Writing in 1920s, in the *Cambridge History of India, (Vol. V)* Sir E.Dension Ross says, "The first expedition which the new Governor undertook was against Calicut, but it achieved nothing beyond the destruction of a few buildings, and Albuqerque himself received two wounds in the shoulder" *(p.10)*. K.M. Panikkar, in his *Asia and Western Dominance,* gives the full picture : "Previous failures in their encounters with the Zamorin rankled in the minds of the Portuguese, and Dom Manuel (the King of Portugal) had sent out no less a person than the Grand Marshall of Portugal, Dom Fernando Coutinho, with express orders to reduce Calicut and destroy the power of Zamorin. A surprise attack was decided upon. Two fleets, known respectively as the fleet of Portugal and the fleet of India under the separate commands of the Marshall and the Governor, appeared before Calicut carrying a large expeditionary force. A landing was effected without much difficulty. The Zamorin was away from the capital at the time, but the palace guard who engaged the Portuguese invaders, found no difficulty in defeating them. In a sharp engagement the Portuguese forces were cut to pieces, the Grand Marshall along with 70 hidalgos losing their lives. Albuquerque himself received two wounds, one in the left arm and the other in the neck. A cannon shot felled him to the ground and he was carried unconscious to his ship. Thus ended in disaster the first attempt to challenge the power of an Indian ruler on land. "The defeat of the Portuguese under their greatest

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leader at Calicut had far reaching consequences. For two hundred and thirty years after this, no European nation attempted any military conquest or tried to bring any Indian ruler under his conrol." *(pp. 46-47)*

Footholds At Goa & Diu

Goa was no doubt occupied and converted into a great base, but this was with the help of Tulaji, the Hindu chief of the area. He joined the Portuguese in order to weaken the Adil Shahi Sultan's authority in the neighbourhood. It suited the Vijayanagar emperors also. They could get arms, equipments and horses through this outlet to the sea. This their enemies the Adil Shahis would not have allowed. The Potuguese took full advantage of the fact that the Vijayanagar emperors were as much inimical to the Muslim rulers as they themselves were.

Diu was not conquered by the Portuguese. They were allowed to build a fort there by Bahadur Shah (Ruler of Gujarat) who hoped to get their help against the Mughals.

Official Trade & Claim Of Monopoly

Apart from the above, these documents of the Portuguese, as also those of the Dutch and the English deal only with the official trade of these European nations. They do not say anything about the private trade of the Europeans, nor about the Indian merchants in these waters. The official reports, as shown above, are slanted. As A. Dasgupta points out in his essay in the *Cambridge Economic History of India (Vol. I)*, "... whatever documentation there may be is untrustworthy, its narrative warped by personal considerations and its figures swelled by individual greed."*(p.408)*

As the Lord of Navigation, Commerce, etc. of the Indian seas, the Portuguese King ordered that he held the monopoly of spice trade. Nobody else, whether Portuguese or Arab or Gujarati, was to trade in spices. If a Portuguese transgressed this order, he would lose all his property and his salary. The Muslims were to be imprisoned after forfeiting their goods and the ships. In practice, the Muslims were killed, if it was found that they were carrying spices. The King also reserved to himself the import of horses to western India. The Portuguese also claimed monopoly on certain trade routes, such as from Goa to Malacca, Diu to east Africa, etc.

CONTROL OF THE SEA : *CARTAZ SYSTEM*

Again as Lords of the Sea, the Portuguese claimed that no ship could sail on the Indian Ocean without a *cartaz* or pass from them. The pass stated who the captain of the ship concerned was, how big the ship was, and what crew it carried. The ship had to call at a Portuguese fort to pay customs before it proceeded on its voyage. A cash security left at the fort served as a guarantee that the ship would call on its return voyage also, to pay more duties. Any ship without a *cartaz* was automatically confiscated as a fair prize, and its crew either killed at once or sent to the galleys.

The Portuguese maintained this *cartaz* system on the Arabian Sea for nearly a century. Not that they were very successful in this, considering their limitation of manpower and patrolling ships; but people considered it prudent to take a *cartaz* before venturing out on the sea. Even Akbar who sent pilgrim ships from Surat, petitioned and accepted a *cartaz* every year. Akbar was given this *cartaz* free.

MAGIC & ROMANCE OF ....

The Gujarati merchants found that it was, on the whole, more convenenient to trade by paying the *cartaz* fees than to quarrel with the Portuguese. The fees could be easily recouped by raising the prices, for the *cartaz* cost them about five per cent of the value of the cargo. The Gujarati merchants, therefore, had the same trade as they had before the Portuguese came. In fact, their business increased because the Portuguese were far more opposed to *foreign* Muslim trade than that done by Hindu and local Muslims. The Hindu and Gujarati Muslims, trade to the Red Sea from Gujarat increased at the expense of the Middle East Muslim trade from Malabar. In the later part of the 16th century, *cartaz* fees became a very important source of revenue of the Portuguese state in the western Indian Ocean.

AN INDIAN INTERLUDE : Angrias Of West Coast

It took the Indians nearly 200 years to pay back the Portuguese in the same coin. This was done by the Angrias on the west coast of India in the first half of the 18th century. "The original Khonaji Angria had been the commander-in-chief of the Maratha navy, but he broke away to found an independent principality in a stretch of territory about 240 miles in length by forty miles in breadth between the sea and the Western Ghats from Bombay harbour to Wingurla. The Angria chiefs rejected the designation of 'pirates', which their European enemies bestowed upon them, but their formidable grabs, gallewats, ketches and other light but well-armed vessels attacked all merchant ships of any nationality wherever they saw the chance of doing so. The Angrias' prestige was greatly increased by their repulse of the Anglo-Portuguese attacks on their main stronghold of Culabo (Colaba) in December 1721, and at this period, some of the Portuguese traders from the Province of the North were even accepting Angrian *cartaz* or passports to secure their ships from molestation, a painful humiliation for the subjects of a monarch who still styled himself 'Lord of Conquest, Navigation and Commerce' of the Indian Ocean." - [C.R. Boxer,*The Portuguese Seaborne Empire, 1415-1825, (pp. 136-137).]*

Spice Trade Diverted From Venice To Lisbon

The Indian merchant ships had to fend for themselves against pirates on the open sea. The *cartaz* they took did not mean that the Portuguese would protect them. The Indian ships did not also get any help from the kingdoms and empires on the main land. As Bahadur Shah of Gujarat said, "Wars by sea are merchants' affairs, and of no concern to the prestige of kings."

The effect of the Portuguese monopoly of spices from the East on the European spice market was serious. The main distribution centre of spices in Europe was Venice. Before the Portuguese started carrying spices from India in their ships, spices were carried by Asian ships up to the Persian Gulf or Red Sea ports. From there, the spices were carried by land to the Mediterranean ports. The Venetian ships then carried these to Venice. The Portuguese stopped the routes through western Asia and started sending spices direct to Lisbon by the all-sea route. Lisbon became the main distribution centre of spices for Europe. By one stroke, all spice trade of Venice was brought to a stand-still

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Braudel writes in his book cited above: "News of the Portuguese achievement led to a serious crisis in Venice, and a wave of gloomy prophecies. The consequences of Portuguese discoveries were envisaged with alarm; disaster appeared irremidiable. To this city of St Mark, the loss of spice trade 'would be like the loss of milk to a new born babe', wrote Girolomo Printi in his Journal of July, 1501. ... In 1504, the Venetian galleys found no spices at Alexandria or Beirut. *(Vol. I, p. 543)*

The Portuguese tried to take all the advantages of their monopoly position in the spice trade. While buying the spices in India or Malacca, they paid the lowest possible price, while when they sold the spices in Lisbon they charged the highest. Thus the Portuguese made enormous profit out of the spice trade in the beginning. But this position did not last very long. The demand for spices was increasing in Europe, and the Portuguese found that it was beyond their means to finance this trade. At first they tried to get the help of German and Florentine merchants and bankers. But by the middle of the century, they found that they were unable to maintain their monopoly of supplying Europe by the sea route round the Cape of Good Hope.

Also, they were unable to blockade the spice route through the Persian Gulf or the Red Sea. They lacked the requisite manpower and ships. Another reason why Lisbon declined and Venice regained its position has been given by Braudel: "At what point did the tide turn – for there is no doubt that turn it did – in favour of Venice and the Mediterranean ports – It is hard to say. One factor no doubt was the movement of prices after 1540s, which may be presumed to have disturbed tha prosperous trade of Lisbon; and another the reportedly inferior quality of Portuguese commodities, whose aroma, according to connoisseurs, was diminished by the long sea voyage ... Mediterranean trade with intermediary Arab connections, was probably able by paying higher prices, to reserve superior quality for itself. The Portuguese may be going too far, when they, insisted on offering extremely low purchasing prices in Asia. *(Op. cit. p. 545)* (Note: The Portuguese spices trade from Malabar is discussed in detail by Genevieve Bouchon in the seventh chapter, 'Sixteenth Century Malabar and the Indian Ocean' of the book under review.)

NEW PORTS: Pulicat & Malacca

Pulicat was the most important port of the Coromandel coast in the first half of the 16th century. It was the main port of the Vijayanagar empire. Pulicat traded with Malacca across the Bay of Bengal. Malacca at that time was one of the busiest ports of the Indian Ocean. Merchants from many countries exchanged their goods there. Gujarati Muslims were the prominent traders. Others were Klings (Telegu and Tamil speaking merchants), the Chinese, the Javanese, and the Muslims from Bengal. When, in 1511, Albuquerque occupied Malacca, the Gujaratis and the Klings shifted to Acheh in Sumatra, and other ports. But Pulicat on Coromandel coast maintained its importance until the fall of Vijayanagar in 1565. Thereafter, as Pulicat declined, Masulipatnam, north of Pulicat, started rising. This was the port of the Kingdom of Golkunda. Its main trading partner on the other side of the Bay of Bengal was Acheh.

Chittagong & Satgaon

Bengal had two important ports, one in the east and the other in the west. The eastern port was Chittagong, and the western, Satgaon. They were quite busy ports. The Portuguese also traded there, but they were non-officials. In fact, except for Malacca, the Portuguese did not have any fort on the Bay of Bengal. Most of the Portuguese who traded in the ports of the Bay of Bengal were non-officials. On the Arabian Sea, on the other hand, most of the Portuguese trade was carried on by/in the ships of the King of Portugal. This sea, with a number of Portuguese forts on its coast was thought by the Portuguese as a part of their sea-borne empire. George Weinus in an essay in *Itinerario, (Vol.7 (2), 1983),* thought that the Bay of Bengal/ was a part of their 'Shadow Empire'.

The Portuguese called Chittagtong, Porto Grande or Great Port, and Satgaon, Porto Pequeno, the Little Port. Both Chittagong and Satgaon were important ports from earlier days,; but we do not know how old they are. It is said that these places became ports for international commerce after the advent of Muslims in Bengal, in about AD 1200. Satgaon is mentioned as an important port in the biographies of Chaitanya written in the middle of the 16th century and later. Chittagong's name occurs in Bengali literature sometime after.

SULTANS OF BENGAL & THE PORTUGUESE

But Portuguese records mention Chittagong from about 1518. In the early years, some official Portuguese ships were sent to Bengal. But most of their leaders resorted to piracy and other unlawful activities, and were driven out by the Sultans of Bengal. The first such expendition under the Dom Joao-de-Silveria had come to Chittagong in 1518, but the Governor of Chittagong thought that he was a pirate and refused to allow him to do business there.

One of the last official expeditions, it appears, came in 1533, under one Martin Affonso de Mello Jusarte. He made some presents to the Sultan of Bengal, among which were "found several bottles of scented water known to have come from a Muslim merchantman recently plundered by a Portuguese pirate." The fact was discovered because the precautions of removing from the offensive packets the labels of the original owner had not been taken. (S.N.Sen in the chapter 'Portuguese in Bengal' in *The History of Bengal,* Vol. II, p.356) De Mello and 30 of the Portuguese were taken prisoners and sent to Gaur, the then capital of Bengal. Fortune, however, favoured him.

The Sultan of Bengal was attacked by Sher Shah Suri. The Sultan sought the help of the Portuguese prisoners, and, as the price, allowed the Portuguese to trade from two ports, one in west and the other in east Bengal. These were Satgaon and Chittagong respectively. So far as military help was concerned, it was not of much use. Sher Shah chased out the Sultan of Gaur, who died of his wounds (c. AD 1538). The Portuguese, however, continued to use the priveleges of the two ports. These Portuguese traders were all private, and no official Portuguese ships visited Bengal after this.

There was brisk trade from these ports by the Arabs, Persians, and Gujarati Muslims. The Portuguese private traders joined in this activity. So far legitimate trade was

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concerned, things continued normally for the next nearly one hundred years.

Trading Post At Hugli – Merchants & Missionaries

The river in Satgaon was getting silted up, and after about 1560, larger ships from the Bay of Bengal could not sail upto that port. One Caesar Frederick who came to Bengal in 1567 reported that at that time, only small ships could go upto Satgaon. About 30 or 35 such ships went upto that port that year. The Portuguese, therefore, moved down the river and started trading from a place called Hugli. But there was no offical permission to settle down at that place and build warehouses, and trade from there. The Portuguese also built a church at this place. The Mughal records do not mention about any such permission. About 50 years later, in 1629, an Augustinian missionary, Fray Sebastien Manrique, came to Hugli from Goa. He was in southern Bengal and also in Arakan for some years. After going back to Europe, he wrote a detailed account of his travels in India. He has mentioned in this work the story of the foundation of the Portuguese settlement at Hugli. The story gathered half a century after the event must have been based on oral traditions current in Hugli.

Manrique wrote that the Portuguese merchants used to bring many fancy things, such as Chinese porcelain, to Hugli for sale to local merchants. The merchants in their turn carried them to the court of Akbar. The Emperor ordered that one or two prominent Portuguese should be sent to the court. The governor of Bengal could find only one prominent Portuguese in Hugli. He was sent to the court. This man Pero Tavarez, carried with him a number of presents for the Emperor. Akbar was pleased with him, gave him a *siropao*, and permitted him to found at Hugli a town with a church and a monastery for the padres. This was near about 1577. The name of Pero Tavarez is not found in any of the official chronicles of Akbar's reign. The English translator of Manrique's *Travels* conjectures that he might be the same person as Pertab Bar mentioned in the *Akbarnama*.

TRADE IN SLAVES : PORUGUESE PUNISHED

Hugli was not only a trading port of the Portuguese merchants, but it became also the centre of activity of the Augustinian missionaries. The missionaries came to Hugli and then spread out into Orissa, southern Bengal and Arakan. It appears from the report given by Manrique that the Portuguese of Hugli were a prosperous lot. One of their commodities of trade was slaves whom they caught in southern Bengal. They raided the villages in Sunderbans and the neighbouring areas, and caught all the persons they could lay hands on. They sold some of the slaves in Arakans. Others they sold in Hugli to rich Muslim merchants. Some were exported to Ceylon and other foreign countries.

In course of time, the Portuguese became quite insolent, and Shah Jahan had to punish them. Their township in Hugli was destroyed under orders of the Emperor, in 1632. Manrique who was in Arakan at that time thought that the immediate provocation to the Emperor was the complaint of a Muslim nobleman of Dhaka. His wife had been abducted by the slave raiders. The retribution was terrible. The Portuguese settlement at Hugli was wiped out. Severe punishment was meted out to those who were taken porisoners; some were executed, and others were imprisoned, and the rest were given the choice between death and conversion. Thus their settlement in Hugli ended.

But that did not stop the depredations of the Portuguese outlaws in southern Bengal. In fact, these might have increased in south eastern Bengal, that is, in the area now a part of Bangladesh. Here the Portuguese outlaws continued their slave raids with the connivance of the King of Arakan who had occupied the port of Chittagong. Shayista Khan, the Mughal Governot of Bengal, defeated the Arakanese and captured Chittagong in January 1666. The depredations of the Portuguese stopped for all time, and peace returned to southern Bengal.

Enslaved Prince As A Missionary :
Dom Antonio do Rozario

In one of their raids in 1663, the raiders captured the young scion of a local zamindar family. The other persons who were captured along with him said that he was a prince of Bhushana. The raiders spared him and gave him to Augustinian missionaries who converted him to Christianity. They named him Dom Antonio do Rozario. 'Dom' in the beginning of the name shows that the missionaries either believed or wanted to believe that he was actually a prince. Dom Antonio was allowed to come home. He became a missionary himself. He wrote a book in Bengali in which he tried to prove the superiority of the Christian religion over Brahminism. The manuscript of the book in Roman script is preserved in Avero in Portugal. The importance of the book is that it was one of the earliest prose writing in Bengali. A few years ago, Tarapada Mukherji collected from the records of the Augustinian and Jesuit missionaries all that can be found out about this first writer of Bengali prose in his book *Itihase Upekshita* (in Bengali.)

Many Portuguese who had settled down in Bengal married Bengali women, and lived practically as Bengalis. They introduced many Portuguese words in Bengali (and Hindi). Some of these words are: *chavi* (Portuguese, *chave); girja* (Portuguese *igreja – church); pipa* (drum); etc. The number of Portuguese words in Bengali are about a hundred. But the number of Portuguese words which entered the south western and southern languages are many more. Monsignor Sebastio R. Dalgado studied all these words in his Portuguese book, which was translated into English by A.X.Soares as *Influence of Portuguese Vocables in Asiatic Languages* (Baroda, 1936).

THE DUTCH INFLUENCE
IN BENGAL & SOUTH INDIA

The Dutch also traded extensively in Bengal from the middle of the 17th century to the first quarter of the 18th century. Their settlement in Bengal was in **Chinsura** (now a part of the Hugli town), and they held the place upto 1825 when they ceded it to Great Britain. In all these years that the Dutch lived here, their cultural and linguistic influence on Bengal and Bengali were negligible. Indeed, S.K. Chatterjee counts only seven Dutch words in Bengali, three of them being the names of cards, and one a term in card play These are *haratan* = hearts from *'harten'; ruitan* = diamonds from 'ruitan'; *iskabon* = spades from 'schopen'; *turup* = trump in cards from 'troef'; *iskurup* = screw from 'schroef'; *bom* = shaft of carriage from 'boom'; and *pispas* = a dish of rice and meat from 'poespas'. *Chiditan,* the

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name of clubs in Bengali is not from the Dutch. It is from the Hindi 'chidiya'. *(Origin and Development of the Bengali Language, p.215).*

The Dutch had a number of trading stations in South India for over two hundred years. It is possible that several Dutch words entered Tamil and other South Indian Languages. But, in any case, the influence of Dutch on these languages was much less than that of the Portuguese. This was true of Malaysian languages also. C.R. Boxer in the book mentioned above discusses this point as to why Portuguese had so much more influence on Asian languages than Dutch. *(pp.125-126)* The Portuguese had an initial advantage inasmuch as they arrived in Asian waters almost a century before the Dutch. By the time the latter came, Portuguese had become almost the *lingua franca* of the coastal regions where they traded. "In Asia the Portuguese language, or rather the Creole forms thereof, resisted the Dutch official pressure and legislation with even more remarkable success. The King (or Emperor) of Kandy in Ceylon, Raja Sinha II (1629-1687) though allied with Netherlands against the Portuguese, refused to accept letters or despatches written in Dutch, and insisted on their being in Portuguese, which language he spoke and wrote fluently. The contemporary Muslim rulers of Macassar were like-wise fluent in Portuguese, and one of them had read all the works of the Spanish devotional writer Fray Luis de Granda O.P. in the original." Portuguese was perhaps an easier language to learn. In Batavia, the Dutch colonial capital, even the Dutch and half- caste women born and bred there spoke Portuguese, "sometimes to the exclusion of their mother tongue."

SOME PORTUGUESE "GIFTS" :

Fruits, Vegetables & Printing Press

The Portuguese brought many fruits and vegetables into India from America. The most important among them are potato, tobacco and maize. Some others are: guava, pineapple, papaya, etc.

Another thing which the Portuguese brought in and which could have greatly enriched our civilization if we had realized its importance was the printing press. The Portuguese established a printing press in Goa in 1556. The machine was originally meant for Abyssinia. While on its way there *via* Goa, it was detained in Goa, because of some political upheaval in Abyssinia. Printing was started in Goa in the same year, when some sheets containg Christian tracts were published. The first book to be printed in Goa was *Doctrina Christao* by St. Francis Xavier. This was in 1557.

The books printed in Goa were religious tracts. It is interesting to note, however, that a secular book was also printed there. Garica d'Orta's *Coloquios dos simples, e drogas he cousas medicinaes da India* (Conversations on Indian plants and drugs refering to the medicine of India) came out in 1563. This book by d'Orta was one of the very few books in Portuguese by a layman in the 16th century. "It had a far wider circulation abroad in the numerous translations, and adaptations made by Carolus Clusius (1526-1609) than it ever obtained in the Portuguese world, where it lay neglected for centuries. (Boxer, *Op.cit. p.348*)

Other presses were established by the Portuguese on the Malabar coast, and at least one of them printed the Christian tract *Doctrina Christina,* in the Tamil script (in 1579). This was the first printed work in an Indian script. (B.S. Kesavan has collected all the materials on the subject in his *History of Printing and Publishing in India,* 1985).

It is strange that the usefulness of a printing press did not strike any Indian ruler. Even Akbar failed to realize its importance. Jawaharlal Nehru wrote in his *Discovery of India* : "Yet another very significant thing. The Jesuits presented Akbar with a printed Bible and perhaps one or two other printed books. Why did he not get curious about printing which would have been of tremendous advantage to him in his governmental activities as well as his vast enterprises ?"*(p.220)*

Dr. Ashim Kumar Roy, retired civilian and now immersed in his scholarly pursuits has agreed to extensively cover the period of early Indo European encounters in India.

S.P. Sharma : A VILLAGE GIRL

Writers Workshop, Calcutta (1988) p.59; Rs. 30/- Fbk Rs. 50/- Hbk

A Short Comment by Urmil Talwar

A VILLAGE GIRL and other stories envince a variety of themes and moods. All the stories are set in a village locale, and the scene frequently shifts from the village household depicting the pitiable condition of women in 'A Village Girl' and 'Death of a Bride' to the village well where Rulda plays trick with his headgear and refuses to be exploited by the *safaedposh*, from the village chaupal in "A Guarded Secret," and "Village Justice" to a marriage party in "Village Wisdom". The author has also made good use of folklore in "A Guarded Secret", "A Godly Deed" and "Village Wisdom."

The stories are not monotonous, but provide the spice of life. They are all in realistic strain and do not delineate ideal situations and characters.

In "A Typical Teacher", Ramdiya is not an ideal teacher; instead he is indisplined, unpunctual, rude and ill mannered. He is unusympathetic and greedy. He takes Mr. Metha and his family to hospital only for money; talks of his political connections; bribes the authorities. Similarly "Village Justice" is an ironical presentation of the village panchas.

The main focus of the stories, as the title suggests, is to highlight the sordid condition of womenfolk in a village in India. Kamla, in "A Village Girl" is a young, bright and intelligent girl who stood first in her class; she is unable to find time for her studies after her brother's marriage and his establishing a separate house. But the writer is optimistic, as Kamla vows to educate her daughter and never to discriminate between her son and daughter.

Soon after Kamla's death in "Death of a Bride," her husband realizes his mistake and he informs the police of the heinous crime of his mother. Again, the writer is optimistic; he wishes people to come to the forefront and annihilate this evil from society.

In all the stories, Mr. Sharma takes up the perennial problems faced by people and gives a realistic picture. His stories engross and engage the reader's attention to the last; but his language does not rise to the occasion.

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Some Question Marks on Activism :

THE MEHRAULI GROUP AMONG THE POOR

Primila Lewis
SOCIAL ACTION AND THE LABOURING POOR : AN EXPERIENCE
Vistaar Publications, Delhi, (1991) pp. 267; Rs. 95/-

Review by Harsh Sethi

The Emerging Generation

For those of us who grew up in the seventies, seeking avenues of honest political activism was a traumatic experience. From the collapse of the first Naxalite uprising to the Emergency, journeying through the Nav Nirman Movement in Gujarat, the JP-led Total Revolution and the Railway Strike of 1974 – a whole generation grew up with a deep distrust and cynicism about the macro-political and developmental processes. The government and its developmental progammes and the political parties and their sectarian mobilisation were viewed as cynical manipulations designed to keep the masses fragmented and involved with peripheral issues. What sparked an interest was the hundreds of voluntary social action efforts, wherein middle-class youth went into the field – slums, factory sites, villages and tribal areas – to initiate politico-developmental processes amongst the masses. Somewhat grandiosely entitled 'non-party political process' by romantic theorists, this churning at the grass-roots seemed to be our contribution to the making of an India different from what it was.

By the end of the tumultous eighties, the scene has cnanged dramatically. Voluntary, non-party social action has by now acquired a firm and recognised niche in the developmental and political world. The cast of characters dominating this firmament has changed, as has the language and cultural style of action. Though the problems that sparked off such activity – poverty, injustice, violence, inequity – remain, in fact may have deepened, the 'visible' face of social activism today is dominated by techno-managerial rather than 'politics as culture' concerns. Possibly this is a reflection of the materialist/consumerist tendency that currently hegemonises the world.

The book under consideration traces this story of the post- Emergency transformation through the prism of the praxis of an individual and a group, playing out *'swadharma'* of the politically inclined activist. The author's first book *'Reason Wounded'* told us of her initial involvement with Purbia migrant farm labour in Mehrauli and her months in jail during the Emergency. A personal narrative, somewhat in the genre of Mary Tyler's *'My Years in Prison'*, Primila 'Lewis's' *'Reason Wounded'* has struck a deeply sympathetic chord in the minds of many others similarly inclined activists.

POVERTY IN DELHI'S OUTSKIRTS

'Social Action and the Labouring Poor', a sequel to the earlier book, traces the experiences of Primila Lewis and the Mehrauli Group, with the different strata of migrant farm labour, harijan landless peasants, and semi-bonded quarry workers on the outskirts of Delhi from 1978 to 1988. Unlike the earlier efforts, wherein the author's positions had to be gleaned out from within the text, this book makes explicit the ideological pre- suppositions of the activity. The Mehrauli experiment was a self- conscious effort by activists of a Marxist/Maoist persuasion to effect social transformation in the countryside as a part of the larger revolutionary impulse.

What the book traces is a complex narrative, not just of the work in distinct locations with different strata through different intervention agencies – a union, a service cooperative and a voluntary development agency – but of the theoretical/ideological debates accompanying each shift in the process. What we thus have is much more than a detailed case study of an 'intervention' effort in a specific locale. It is the unique opportunity of associating with the process of evolution, with all its twists and turns and the accompanying agony, of a group and its thinking.

The privilege of following through the process – of how the Delhi Dehat Mazdoor Union grew in strength to acquire an autonomous and stable status; the struggle for land by the Mandi Harijans, their forming a cooperative, and then finally selling off the land to the urban builders; or the building of the quarry workers' cooperative, its growth and subsequent collapse – is a rare one. But even more is the insight gained about the mind of the activist and the process of articulation of activism. It is the tracing of the long, arduous and contradictory journey from a firmly held belief in a Maoist revolution to a position best described as 'testing out every position on the *kasauti*' of hard reality; the placing of high premium on the notion of revisability – that is likely to resonate with all those committed to honest activism.

To put it mildly, working out such a complex design is not easy. Nevertheless, the narrative holds; the descriptions and characterizations are sharp, the debates on the making and unmaking of practice clear. The implications of choices made in a heavily constrained environment are etched out with a rare lucidity and honesty.

Through the narrative we are taken through a story of courage and commitment, essential humanity, any number of valuable nuggets of sociological observation, with a candour that is as disarming as it is exceptional. This, when personal narratives almost invariably smack of either a sneaky eulogy or use the opportunity to make personal swipes at others.

At a somewhat 'removed' level, the reader is unsure whether the book represents an autobiography, a chunk of the author's life, the story of a group in process, or a generalisable experience. It is when the author departs from the narrative to comment on the presuppositions and the relative failure of the 'left', the role of the surplus producing peasantry – the kulak, the inherent limitations of feminism, the somewhatt judgemental observation on the NGO scene or even the Rajiv Gandhi regime – what to speak of the root cause of the Punjab problem or the 'now forgotten' Khanjawala agitation – that there is a certain unease. While each of these episodes has a strong bearing on the 'how and why' of choices contemplated and exercised, the themes are in themselves too significant to be adequately handled in the space available. Carricaturing seriously held positions by others equally honestly com-

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RISHIS & SAGES OF OUR CENTURY

GUY SORMAN : FREEDOM ON BAIL : REAL THINKERS OF THE 20TH CENTURY

Vitas, New Delhi, pp.318, Price Rs.295

Comments by Ram K. Vepa

Freedom On Bail is the title of a thought-provoking book byan enterprising French journalist, Guy Sorman, who conceived the original idea of talking to some of the real thinkers of the 20th century and distil their 'wisdom' in the course of a few pages for the genera' reader. For this pupose, he travelled widely to London, Moscow, California Tokyo, Beijing, New Delhi, Mexico City and many other places to meet the people whom he listed as 'real thinkers'.

WHO IS A REAL THINKER ?

How does he define a 'real thinker' ? According to him, he i one "after whom, one can never think of a given field of specialisation in the same way as before him". The author's own background is evident in the list of real thinkers included in the book. Inevitably, any such list tends to b subjective. Of the 29 persons interviewed, the bulk are of European origin, though many of them currently live in the USA or the UK. There is not a single African amongst them, nor any woman, surprising in the current euphoria about both. There are five Asians—two from Japan, two from India and one from China—besides one Latin from Mexico. A notable omission is Ivan Illitch, of the 'non-formalschooling' fame, who refused to talk on the ground that "hisideas were too basic to be divulged" — surely an odd reason for one noted for his originality !

THE RANGE OF IDEAS

In spite of these omissions, the book is a fascinating account of the thinking process of some of the great minds of our time. Admittedly, much of what they said is documented in their books, but there is something spontaneous in an interview missing in the printed page where thoughts are well-ordered to fit a pattern. To help the reader through the bewildering array of ideas, the author has grouped them into eleven categories of thought, ranging from our cosmic origins, anthropology, political and cultual modes, liberalism, the Third World and finally, theology and the eternal truths. This is indeed an impressive range of ideas reflecting the diverse areas of thought represented in the book.

FIVE MAJOR CONCEPTS/CONCERNS

Thematically, the book deals with five major concepts which, in one way or the other, recur throughout the book. These have been summarised by the author himself as the following :

Order Vs Chaos — Is the Universe tending towards greater order or chaos ? Are we the products of more chance, random products of a gigantic genetic lottery, as one of the thinkers believes, or is the uncertainty merely a reflection of our ignorance ? As our knowledge increases, will it lead to greater predictabilty ? Or is it the other way around, with increasing knowledge science will be less able to predict the future ?

Innate Vs Acquired — Are we, as some contend, merely "prisoners of our genes", programmed at birth ? Or, is there an area in which new traits are acquired ? If so, what role does culture play in shaping our thoughts and ideas ? Can it control, even to a limited extent, some of the innate natural traits with which we are born ?

Physics Vs Meta-Physics — Are they contradictory or are they (specially since the start of this century) converging on a common truth ? The scientific methodology is completely different from that of religion; and yet, in a curious way, as men push to probe the infinitely large and the infinitely small, they seem to acquire many of the overtones of metaphysical thought. As Carl Sagan (of Cosmos fame) puts it, the duration of the Universe as conceived in the Hindu mythology (10 billion years) is of the same order as what is now provided by the 'Big Bang' theory (15 billion years). Similarly, the 'Principle of Uncertainty' formulated by Werner Heisenberg seems to have philosophic implications far transcending Physics or Science.

Is Progress inevitable, as was once believed, or is it a more mirage which we are pursuing ? While science goes on accumulating information about the physical universe, we seem to understand less and less of ourselves. In every field, our parents and grand- parents have seen greater changes than we have. True, we are enjoying the benefits of Progress, but has there been any improvement in the 'Quality of Life' ? Has progress come to a stand-still, because scientists are 'seeing' more, but 'thinking' less ?

Relativism or Eternal Truths — Are all 'constructs' merely systems which are tentative and likely to be replaced ? Or, are there 'eternal truths' which are valid for all time to come?

THE IMPASSE OF OUR TIMES

Finally, can individual freedom guarantee cultural, economic and political prosperity, as some believe ? Certainly in the last few years, we have witnessed a surprising resurgence of these ideas in countries which at one time seem to have discarded them. And yet one cannot be sure that their practice conforms to their theoretical formulation. "I am clear" concludes the author, "that the State continues to exploit what is Tribal in Man by underrating what is Universal in him" — and he calls it the "impasses of our times".

It would be impossible to list all the ideas strewn in the book, but let us look at a few of them to get a 'flavour' of the book.

THUS SPEAK THE WISEMEN OF TODAY

For **Zhao Fusan** (of China) the concept of "individual right" is not necessarily the same in China as in the West ; for the latter, all progress is based on the Right of the Individual to grow; but in China, it is based more on the "compliance to the social norm". Education is looked upon in the West as a means to develop the personality of the child; but in China, it is the duty of parents to ensure a social uniformity.

Kenji Nakagama (of Japan) disputes the "myth" of the new Japanese – efficient, organised and productive. He regards

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them as the result of "imperial fascism, "still dominant in Japan and responsible for much of its astonishing post-war success. There is always a conflict between the elite of Japan (who are keen to imitate e.g. Buddhism from Korea, education in the Meiji Restoration and now, industrial technology) and the lower classes (Nakagami himself is a Burakumin – or untouchable) who, according to him, symbolise the true Japanese values – the sense of the transient and the virtue of assimilation.

Ernst Noltke, the German historian, regards the real European War to have begun in 1917, when the Bolsheviks assumed power in the Soviet Union. The Second Word War, to him, is only an interlude and the peace in 1945, only a temporary truce. Auschwitz is merely the "ideological and psychological sequel" of the Russian Revolution ! – No wonder many regard Noltke as a rightist whose thinking is more neo-Nazi.

Von Hayek, the noted economist, feels Democracy has become a mere fetish, and questioning it has become taboo. Majority Rule, he says, has replaced the rule of Law ! Many in India will echo his views, as one sees democracy running riot and spawning the "tyranny of the brute majority". In fact, Democracy, says Von Hayek, has become immoral, unjust and on its way to Totalitarianism.

Rothbird, the 'Guru' of Libertaniasm, goes even further. The State, he says, is a swindle; and everything can be privatised – even Law and Defence. Perhaps, few will agree with his description of the State as the most formalised and largest network of organised crime; though many will concede that a point is being reached where the power of the State needs to be curbed if the Individual is to have a freer life.

Octavio Paz, the well-known Mexican writer (at one time, Ambassador to India) sees old-fashioned Liberalism as the hope of the Developing Societies – not, as he once believed, Revolution. He defines Liberalism as the coupling of political democracy with economic freedom, and sees as its main opponent – Castroism, leading to a totalitarian state. According to Octavio Paz, the poverty of the Third World can be attributed to a single factor : the repression of individual initiative by the State. Certainbly, the remarkable growth of the NIC (newly industrialised countries) in East Asia (Korea, Taiwan, Singapore and Thailand) seems to bear out the truth of this idea. It is sad to see so much of human talent in much of the Third World bottled up by a lumbering bureaucracy on behalf of an all-powerful state.

Ashish Nandy (of India) does not quite agree. He calls himself a 'social activist' – a spokesman of the down-trodden who do not need 'modernisation' as practised by the *West*. He regards the elite of the Third World as suffering from a colonial hang-over, speaking the language of the "coloniser unable to communicate with their own people". Gandhi, according to him, is the only real de-coloniser who refused to adopt the model of resistance provided by the West. Modernisation is leading to a dead end – with the central authority growing stronger at the expense of the periphery; the farmer and the artisan are being destroyed through false hopes and values.

While Nandy seems to reject the 'Development' syndrome of the West, **Swaminathan**, the agricultural expert, believes: the New Technology (in Agriculture) las lead to greater prosperity, at least in some countries (India, Philippines); but it can only do so, if there is individual freedom and the right to private property, which guarantees a fair reward to the farmer. The best defence against famine, he says, is freedom of expression, which leads to greater awareness of what is happening. But then fame is not commensurate with the services rendered; how many, says the author, remember Norman Borlaug, the American agronomist, whose research on Sonora wheat lead to the Green Revolution, eradicating famine ?

There are many other voices in the "living library" of his book whose thoughts will fascinate the reader : **Carl Sagan** who is convinced that the "big bang" is the cause of the Universe and **James Lovelock** (of Gaia fame) who thnks the saving of the tropical forests as humanity's urgent need; **Ilya Prigogine** to whom Einstein was the last great scientist who thought that "God does not play dice with men": **Steven Gould** who believes Darwin as the only scientist of the 19th century not discarded by the 20th, and **Rene Thom** who holds the view that "what is seemingly random is governed by deterministic laws only waiting to be discovered"

So the battle of ideas goes on – determinism, freewill, order, chaos, nature, nurture, liberty, growth, progress, liberalism, state power, individual freedom. One can have one's own beliefs; but it is good to hear what others have to say about the problems that bother us all. One is graeful to the author, who in a true Gallic fashion, has capsuled and condified these ideas in the pages of the book.

Dr. Ram K. Vepa, former civil servant and Delhi-bised technical consultant contributes frequently to this journal and needs no introduction.

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mitted to actualising their visions cannot be a worthwhile response. In fact, at times they divert attention from the more central concern of the predilections of the self-conscious activist.

READABLE ACCOUNT OF THE EXPERIMENT

What at least this reviewer, having been a participant in a few such experiences and debates, finds thought-provoking is not the strategic impulse of '*The Mehrauli Document*', but the process involved in evolving a perspective that incorporates the notion of revisability. To be able to acquire a maturity and a self-confidence that can embrace the pain and the trauma of reconsidering, possibly giving up the security of firmly believed in positions to understand that the 'failure' of self or the group cannot be read as an intrinsic of an activity; and even more to be able to accept with humility that the situation in one's chosen area and mode of intervention may have changed more as a result of process outside one's volition and approval – it is this that marks the true internalisation of an experience. While the Mehrauli experiment, its successes and failures, may not be strictly generalisable to the many other similar efforts in different locales, both the experience and the book capture the spirit of such enterprises. Combined with its honesty and lucidity, this makes the contribution by Primila Lewis a 'must to be read', not just by development-practitioners and activists, but by all concerned individuls.

Scholar, activist & critic, Harsh Sethi is our Editorial Associate based in New Delhi.

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NUCLEAR POWER AND YOU - VII

SAFE MANAGEMENT OF RADIOACTIVE WASTES FROM NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS.

A unique feature of nuclear power plants is the extremely low quantity of radioactive wastes generated — about 0.7% to 2% of spent fuel discharged, depending on the type of reactor and the U235 content in the fresh fuel.

The spent fuel containing most (99%) of the high level radioactivity due to fission products, produces heat, and is stored under water in on-site storage bays, sized to take lifetime discharge. The water, besides cooling, also provides biological shielding from radioactivity to plant personnel.

Newly produced plutonium (Pu) forms about 0.6% and unused uranium (U-238) forms upto 98% of the spent fuel which is eventually taken to reprocessing plants, to recover valuable Pu & Ur, for re-cycling in breeder reactors and to separate the unwanted fission products for disposal. Though it's true, that plutonium 239 has a half-life (period in which radioactivity reduces to half) of 24000 years, it poses no problem, as it is used in breeder reactors to produce electricity and fission products of lesser half-lives. Incidentally, natural uranium (U238) has a half-life of 4.5 billion years. And, precisely because of exceedingly long half-lives, such sources are least radioactive.

The balance 1% radioactivity, resulting from maintenance work on reactor systems, is low level wastes (LLW) in the form of gloves, rags, tools and medium level wastes (MLW) such as spent resins, metal fragments, chemical sludge. These are disposed of at site.

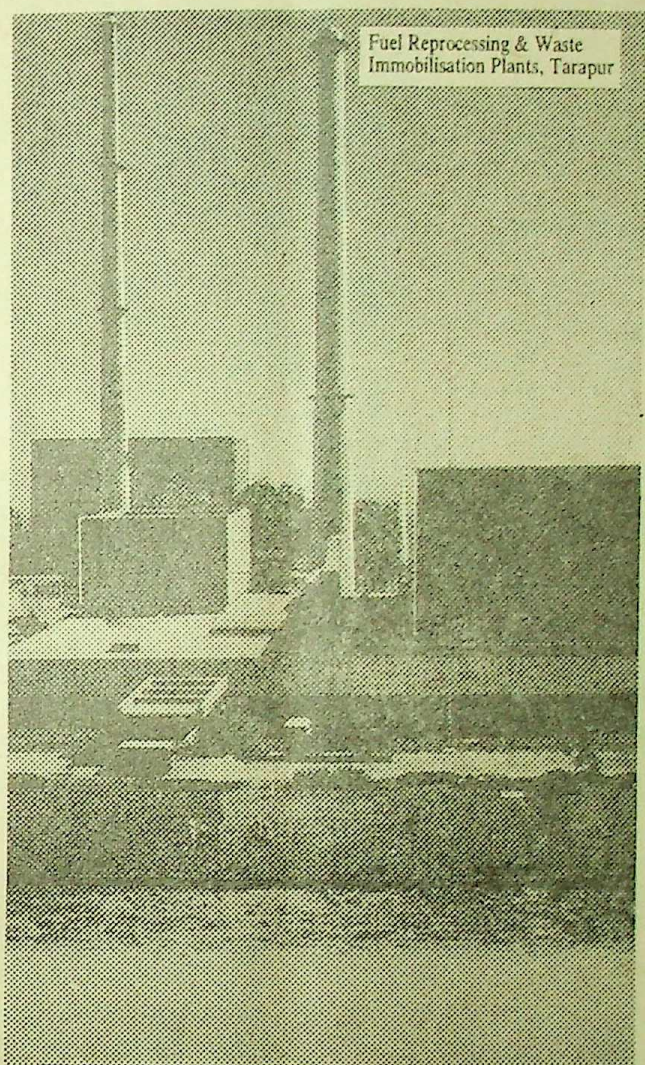
Strategy for waste management.

The main objective is to prevent unacceptable detriment to man or environment, now and in future, and also to minimize the burden on future generations. Hence, the overriding criterion is the radiological and environmental protection achieved, in isolating the wastes from the biosphere during permanent storage.

The CC-Strategy (concentration and containment) is used for managing MLW and HLW (high level wastes),and the DD-Strategy (dilution and dispersion) for LLW. The world over, waste management facilities for segregating, transporting, storing, treating and disposing LLW and MLW are provided at the plant site. But, for HLW, it is taken away from the plant site to reprocessing plants for separating fission products, immobilising them in vitrified blocks, and air cooling the blocks for about 30 years, before finally disposing them in stable geological repositories, several hundred metres deep into the ground.

India's achievement in reprocessing and managing radioactive wastes.

Spent fuel reprocessing is essential for India, which has limited uranium resources, so as to extend their utilisation and to reduce the HLW quantities for disposal. The first reprocessing facility at Trombay was commissioned 25 years ago, in January 1965, as an entirely self-reliant and indigenous effort. The second plant for power reactor fuel reprocessing (PREFRE-1) was built and commissioned at Tarapur in April 1977, establishing long distance inland transportation of spent fuel in shielded flasks, from RAPS (Rajasthan) and MAPS (Tamil Nadu). The Kalpakkam reprocessing plant (KARP) for reprocessing FBR and MAPS fuel is the third unit nearing completion.


Fuel Reprocessing & Waste Immobilisation Plants, Tarapur

For ***handling radioactive wastes*** at each of the nuclear power stations, the gaseous wastes are passed through very fine filters and discharged into the atmosphere. Low level liquid wastes are filtered, diluted, monitored and dispersed in to rivers, reservoirs or the sea. MLW liquids are concentrated and fixed in cement. Solid wastes are disposed of in shallow land repositories (SLR). Bore holes are provided around the SLR to monitor ground water for any evidence of leaching.

The Waste Immobilisation Plant (WIP) commissioned in March 1985 at Tarapur, bituminises and vitrifies high level liquid wastes. The glass blocks are cast into stainless steel containers, two of which are placed within a metal overpack and kept in the interim air cooled Solid Storage & Surveillance Facility (S^3F). The S^3F can store upto 2000 overpacks with air cooling, for about 30 years. After which, they will be emplaced in stable geological repositories. Investigations are in progress for candidate repository sites. The safety requirements for the reprocessing and waste management plants (where most of the work is done remotely in shielded chambers), are stipulated and checked by the Regulatory Body to safeguard plant personnel, public and environment.

HIGHLIGHTS OF RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT IN INDIA

Year		1985	2000	Disposal
Installed Power capacity	MWe	1310	10,000	
Primary Solid Very Low Level Wastes (VLLW)	M^3	1850	107,000	Earth trenches at plant site SLR
Low Level Waste Concentrates (LLW)	M^3	3000	77,000	Concrete trenches at plant site SLR
Intermediate Level Wastes (ILW)	M^3	800	20,000	Steel-lined concrete tile holes at plant site SLR
High Level Liquid Wastes (HLW)				
Non-Solidified	M^3	440	8,000	In SS tanks at WIP
Solidified (Vitrification)	M^3	—	400	Interim storage in S^3F near WIP

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POEMS-

Laxmi Narayan Mahapatra

I Implore

This night ....
On its last leg, seems unending
The dawn-point is far away
though, it looks
like the last scene of a play.

Dark pervades the outer world
the wind moans;
the highway is deserted
and wavelets dance in the blind dark blue
of an insensate lake.

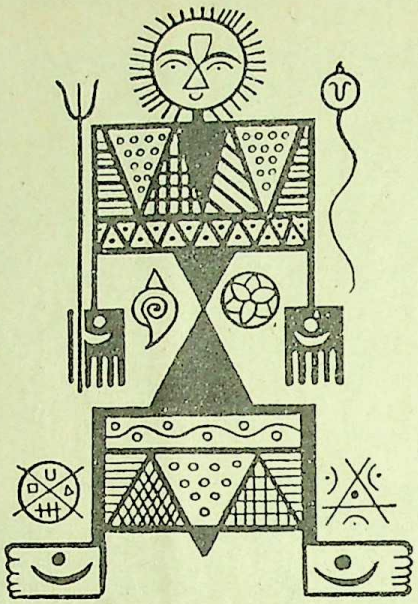
The voice of a lone nameless bird
floats high
from an unknown place afar;
someone weeps and moans
and the faint tinklings rise
from a consciousness
stilled at its surface in a swoon.

Mother, lift me up
from my body's threshold
where I stand
looking askance at the blue sky
benighted ... with my hands raised.

Who am I ?
Why do I moan
in this dead city ?
For whom ?
Why do I stand alone
in a lone field, close to weeds
away from ripe corn ?

But in this night's entrails
in this blind night
in the shrill crooning of the wintry wind
I see you, O my mother,

O, lift me up, Mother ...
pluck me from this engulfing dark.



The End of Night

I

Give me a sun red, gleaming and hot
give me the sun that will shatter
the night into shreds
give me the blood-red sun
that will glow like a heart.

Give me a red rose
that remainds of the life
each petal in scarlet like blood
and smiles a baby-face
in its pistils and pollensacs.

Give me a drop of dew
that has trickled from a flower's eye
give me a drop of dew
that would be gleaming hot
like the tears of starving mother
suckling her hungry child.

II

How long will the night last
how long the darknness will reign
how long the butchers will play
spraying the blood ?

The night may be long, dark and grim
machine guns may roar with tread of heavy boots
The huts of poor may be set ablaze
by the mean conspiracy
of the agents of darkness
they may scatter the corpses of
infants and babes all over the earth
They may ravish our sisters and daughters
but ... tell me, how long ?

The cruel bloodstained lips may laugh aloud
at the skeletons marching along
on the highway of power and doom
but how long would this drama go on ....
O tell me, how long ?

The dawn is bound to come
the tyrants cannot escape the blaze of sun
The gloom has to seek retreat
and life will throb ...
with the glowing sun.

Laxmi Narayan Mahapatra is Editor "Poetry Time" Quarterly
Giri Road, Behiampur - (Orissa)
(Translated from the original Oriya by the poet)

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THE BIZARRE WORLD OF A YOUNG BUREAUCRAT

Upamanyu Chatterjee : ENGLISH, AUGUST
Faber, (1988) Rupa, (1989)

Reviewed by R.K. Kaul

It is nearly three years since this book was published. The excuse for reviewing it at this date is that this book has been under-rated by the average reader. *[Editors regret that neither a review copy of the book nor any review was received earlier.]*

HYBRID & UN-INDIAN CHARACTER

Fairly late in the novel, we are told that to the protagonist Agastya, "the world seemed infinitely bizarre" *(p.196)* The novel has an air of being bizarre, at least improbable, possibly because of its hybrid character. To begin with, the protagonist is called "August", a pet name which places him firmly in Anglo India (incidentally, the distinction between Anglo-Indian and Indo-Anglian is getting dimmer every day.) His father is a Bengali who has risen to the high position of a Governor and his mother is a Goan Christian

At the very opening, the inedible "*dal* served to him in the Rest House is compared to "luke warm chilled shampoo". *(p.6)* It is difficult to see how it could have been both lukewarm and chilled at the same time. The point, however, is that the comparison of "dal" with shampoo is un-Indian. Another striking comparison (there are so many of them in the novel) is occasioned by the smell of an antibiotic capsule. It was blue and yellow, and smelt like stale-sweaty armpit, like a crowded Calcutta bus in summer." *(p.92)* If he had written "in a crowded Calcutta bus". The comparison would have been appropriate, coming from a genteel Bengali. Would it be too far-fetched to see the influence of Swift in the reference to the arm-pit? The author's comparisons have flavours native and exotic.

The use of obscene words in this novel has put off many readers, rather as Mulk Raj Anand's transliteration of native abuses used to put off readers at one time. (It is a mercy, he is not as scatological as Mr Vijayan). At the present moment the appearance of four letter words is the rule rather than the exception in English fiction. The peculiarity of Mr Chatterjee's use of obscene words, however, is that they are hybrid compounds (*e.g.* hazar-fucked)

DROP-OUT TURNED BUREAUCRAT

The protagonist seems to be an improbable combination of a drop-out and a bureaucrat. (The reviewer's experience is that they become conformists as soon as they enter the bureaucracy). His dependence on drugs and masturbation is compatible with his maniac obsession with exercise at improbable hours. He improvises lies gratuitously in response to questions about his private life, and he finds peace in the *Meditations* of Aurelius (surely an old-fashioned taste) and the *Gita*.

In the course of his probation, he comes in contact with the self-important Srivastava (the Collector under whom he receives his training); Kumar, the Superintendent of Police, who is only moderately corrupt; and younger civil servants, Forest officers and Sathe the cartoonist. In the company of the younger group, he rolls a "joint" (slang for marijuana). With the police officer he drinks whisky. With the pompous senior bureaucrats, he has to be sober and pretend not to be bored.

He toys with the idea of throwing up civil service, but moves steadily on in his career to become a B.D.O., and finally an Assistant Commissioner. It is not clear at the end of the novel, when he decides to take a year's leave, whether he will resume district administration.

Once he responds to the needs of a tribal woman and her people *(p.255)* his aptitude for administration is evident. In spite of his self-disparagement, he is rated as an efficient, energetic officer.

SOME DIGRESSIONS & AMUSING CHARACTERS

There are interesting digressions in the novel such as the appearance of the mild-mannered English-man, John Avery, who is married to a bossy Indian female. A sub-plot runs through the novel about his friends Dhrubo and Renu. The latter deserts Dhrubo to take up a teaching job in the United States. August's own emotional involvement with Neera comes to an abrupt end at the end of the novel, when she writes to say that she has lost her virginity to some one else. The reader gets a view of all the females who appear in the novel (like Mrs Srivastava) through the adolescent, sex-starved character of the protagonist.

One of the most amusing characters in this engaging novel is Tamse, the enghineer-architect. He does not appear directly, but we are constantly reminded of his talent for creating ugly art and embezzlement. Not content with defacing the walls of the rest house with his shoddy paintings, he erects memorials to national leaders. One piece of sculpture was so shapeless that the narrator calls it, "a Tamsevian mutilation of what could have been either Sarojini Naidu or a turbanless C.V.Raman."

There are frequent references to the Naxalites. These, together with the description of the soil and the trees point to Andhra Pradesh (or one of its neighbouring States) as the location of the story. But the incidents could have happened in almost any part of India.

A NATIVE ALIEN

The narrator (an upper class Bengali intellectual) finds the scene of women worshipping the phallus of Shiva kinky *(p.128)*. He is impressed by Karanth who has worked among lepers all his life *(p.234)*, possibly a reference to Baba Amte. These two reactions show that "August" is both an alien and a native.

Because the writer does not interpret the responses of the protagonist for the reader, the impact of the novel is bizarre. The protagonist seems improbable to the reader, because the reader is not permitted to look at him from the outside. We are trapped inside his consciousness. The writer, however, knows better, and so should the reader.

Dr. R.K.Kaul has contributed this review on his return to the home ground at Jaipur, after a short assignment as visiting Professor at Delhi University.

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..... I LONG FOR HOME

Sushma Batra : OUTPOURINGS (A collection of poems) *A Writers Workshop RedBird Book, Calcutta*

Review by Purnendu Goswami

All poetry is, by and large, made of the outpourings of the heart. What makes poetry great is neither the true expression of feelings, nor the craftsmanship with which the poet presents the commonplace in the form of something sublime. If the experience of the poet is rightly given the tints of universal relevance, and the reader's experience begins to assimilate into that of the poet, then certainly, poetry gathers value.

Sushma Batra's collection of the poems *'Outpourings'* is not a case of craftsmanship, nor is it a question of making the commonplace sublime. It is the sheer offering of "the love from my depths comes surging /As my soul's outpourings for you." But the reader, at very few places, shares his/her feelings with the poet. The poet chooses spasmodic experiences to pen down, because she has unknowingly got some egocentric philosophy of life. For Sushma Batra, the meaning of life is "to return to our source and merge in Thee"; and this,she says, she does through the "labyrinthine lanes" of her spiritual experiences. She appears to have found the ultimate truth that " nothing is mine... all is His/The Master Supreme. " To her, life is nothing but devotion to the *Guru* , who, as she seems to speak in the full conviction, could lead her to her home, because she has realized that "Eventide is here/And I long for home." But is it the truth of life for all, even for those who are not weary of it ?

The Journey Within & the Exquisite Rose

As given in the blurb, the poet supposes that "the journey within" is perhaps "the most beautiful adventure possible" ; but does she ever find that this is not the sole concern of poetry ? Of course, here and there, she notices her 'ego' and also she wants to get rid of it, but mainly because 'it is the veil that hide thee from me.'

The book has few poems which appear poetic in the true sense of the word, like 'All is Within':-

'Unfit I am for the ways of the world
I mastered not the intricacies here
Words that are hollow and smiles so false
Its devious ways I never did learn.'

In 'Why, Lord, Why' she, a great consolation, at least takes notice of 'the sorrows of ageing/the distress of disease/ The privations of penury'. Here she is every inch a poet, in search of her self....."But why do you hide/ My true self from me/ Why make me suffer -- Why, Lord, Why ?'

The 'Exquisite Rose' is again a beautiful poem, but towards the end, the poet comes to her 'true self' -- 'I salute you/ And I salute the Master Craftsman -- your maker.' A thing of beauty has once again been discarded, though it was the rose itself that appealed the mind of the poet.

The poems are nowhere subtle in their diction, structure or even conception. For a comon reader as well as for those who are theistical, the poems are casual utterances by a devotee soul.

Purnendu Goswami teaches in the Department of English, Dungar College, Bikaner.

A MULTI-FACET PRESONALITY

Prem Nandakumar : 'SRI AUROBINDO' – A Critical Indroduction

A Comment by Raji Prabhakaran

The purpose of any introduction, whether it is the introduction of a person, a book, a new mode of art or a new consumer product is to stimulate further interaction with it and interest in it. The book *"A Critical Introduction"* by Prema Nanda kumar achieves this purpose in full measure.

In twelve brief chapters the author has written all about a multifaceted individual. The book deals with Sri Aurobindo as a philospher, a dramatist, a political journalist, and as a poet. Reading the book leaves one amazed that so much knowledge, talent, wisdom and divinity could be lodged in one human being. Aurobindo is popularly thought of as a divine person, engulfed in religion and divine thinking. Prema Nandakumar deals with the philosophic aspect of the man in a separate chapter – we are given the essence of Sri Aurobindo's religion. We are told that he believed in love towards all humanity. He emphasised this; and the author has done well to quote copiously from his writings.

POET, PLAYWRIGHT & POLITICAL JOURNALIST

The bulk of the book concentrates on the literary talents of Sri Aurobindo. The author deals elaborately with his poems like *"Urvasi" "Love and Death"* and *"Savitri"*. She has taken great pains to acquaint herself well with these poems, to such an extent that she can discuss them with great insight. Not only this, she has delved into the sources for the 'themes' of these poems which lie embedded in the great sea of Sanskrit literature.

The same situation holds good when we study the chapter dealing with Sri Aurobindo's plays. The author's command over words is almost as dazzling and effective as the language and poetry of the sage's plays, which she seeks to elaborate upon. There too, not only Prema Nandakumar pays a tribute to Sri Aurobindo, but in paying such excellent and blemishless a tribute she also wins for herself the admiration and appreciation of the reader.

The political journalist in Sri Aurobindo is a little known aspect of his great personality. There are plenty of chronological facts to absorb in this connection. The facts have been gathered with great effort and persistence.

HIS MESSAGE OF HOPE FOR MANKIND

Some portions of the sixth chapter bring out one feature of Sri Aurobindo's many-sided greatness. He was a philosopher and a man of the world at the same time. He did not advocate goodness, divinity in a vacuum - rather he accepted the need for worldly progress, and gave a message of hope to the common man when he said that godliness and worldliness were not imcompatible.

The book definitely stimulates our interest in Sri Aurobindo. One is left amazed that such a versatile mind had lived in such simplicity and with such grace. We are also full of admiration and respect for Prema Nandakumar who must have laboured long and hard to gather so much interesting and important material. →

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LEADERSHIP & POWER BASE IN MANAGEMENT

Mahfooz A. Ansari : MANAGING PEOPLE AT WORK LEADERSHIP STYLES AND INFLUENCE STRATEGIES

Sage Publications, New Delhi, 1990, pp.218

Comment by Y. Udaya Chandra

Leadership is a much written about subject in the domain of management. But somehow the researchers and authors have not related the subject of leadership to the phenomenon of power exercised in the process of leadership in a big way. The leadership behaviour has not been related to the bases of power to the desired extent. The void in this area has been filled up to a certain extent by M.A. Ansari, who views leadership as a power phenomenon.

STYLES & STRATEGIES

The author has studied the relationship between leadership styles and upward and downward bases of power. The subjects studied by the author identify their leadership styles as participative, task-oriented, bureauratic and authoritarian. They identify their superiors' behaviour in terms of nurturant-task- oriented, participative, bureaucratic and authoritarian. The power exercised by the leader is said to be of the types of coercion, information, reward, legitimate, connection, expert, and referent.

The author studies the influence tactics adopted by the leaders while dealing with the subordinates and superiors. The strategies taken up while influencing the subordinates are: Expertise and giving reasons, personalized help, assertion, positive sanction, showing dependency, coalition and manipulation, upward appeal, exchange and challenge, negative sanction and threat. The upward strategies are: Expertise and giving reasons, ingratiation and exchange, personalized help and diplomacy. The strategies most popular to least popular are in the above order.

The author also studies the effects of organizational climate on the bases of power and influence strategies. The types of organizational climate studied are: Reward and participation, structure, warmth and support.

The author has conducted a survey of seven heterogeneous organizations located in North India, both in public and private sectors. He chose a sample of 440 executives and they were interviewed during 1984 and 1985.

PREDOMINANT STYLES

The author finds that the task-oriented, nurturant-task-oriented and participative styles are the predominant styles in the Indian executives. The executives perceive possessing more expert and referent power to influence subordinates, and expert and reward power to influence the immediate superior. Irrespective of the target of influence, whether superior or subordinate, executives are found to be using more of rational influence tactics like expertise and reasons. They make much less use of such downward influence tactics as threats and negative sanctions and such upward influence tactics as blocking and defiance. The author finds a consistent correspondence between the bases of power and influence strategies. Similarly, consistence exists between leadership styles and influence strategies.

ORGANISATIONAL CLIMATE

The perceived organizational climate is also found to be affecting the use of influence tactics. Organizational climate appears to represent an important moderator in the relationship between leadership style and influence strategies. Organizational climate also affects the relationship between bases of power and the use of influence tactics. Organizational characteristics are also found to be affecting the use of influence tactics. Compared to those in the public sector, managers in the private sector report a frequent use of such upward influence tactics as blocking, defiance, ingratiation and exchange and such downward tactics as exchange and challenge, assertiveness, positive sanction and threat.

The author has done a good work in the area of leadership. However, it will be more useful to the serious students of leadership. He has quoted other authors on leadership very extensively. He has arranged the text in a very systematic way and presented his findings well. His work speaks of an elaborate statistical analysis of the data collected. He has discussed the implications of his findings briefly at the end which could have been elaborated further. On the whole, it can be graded as a standard work comparable to any other on the subject.

Dr. Y.Udaya Chandra is associated with the Centre for Organization Development, Hyderabad - 500 034

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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

George H.Axinn

FAO Representative in India & Bhutan.

Text of an address/paper contributed at the Conference on Development Reconsidered (Rajasthan Chapter S.I.D.)

It is a pleasure to be with you today, and to share some thoughts on sustainable development. Most of these have their origins with others, and I will try to cite them as I go along. The first, for example, was written here in India back in 1908. This is a direct quotation:

"We have for over a century been dragged by the prosperous West behind its chariot, choked by the dust, deafened by the noise, humbled by our own helplessness, and overwhelmed by the speed"...."If we ever ventured to ask, 'progress towards what, and progress for whom,' it was considered to be peculiarly and ridiculously oriental to entertain such doubt about the absoluteness of progress".

The author, as you may have guessed, was Rabindranath Tagore. In my view, Tagore's thought is even more appropriate today than it was then. That is largely because in the interval, those who thought about development and those who tried to implement development, grossly oversimplified the process. What they tried to do simply has not been sustainable.

What is not Sustainable?

It was not sustainable because it assumed that technological transfers could bring about development. It assumed that capital transfers could bring about development. It failed to recognize that the development of any country, any state, or any district must be driven from within that place, not by outsiders. It failed to recognize that equity is a necessary condition of development. If the rich get richer and the poor become more in numbers and even less in wealth, that development will not be sustainable over time. If development discriminates against women and children, it is not sustainable. And if development substitutes machines and chemicals for human labour, and thereby tends to destroy the natural environment, it will not be sustainable.

Among Indian writers on the subject who have captured the essence of the matter, is Rajni Kothari, who wrote that "We have been looking at some of the signposts of our time. But they are not signposts for a new paradigm, just part of the reality in which we live. What would be their significance for alternative development thinking? I suggest that there is a need to go beyond the original conception of 'another development' and 'alternative development strategies', beyond the Brandt Commission, and the North-South dialogues, beyond Cancun and mini-summits convened by Third World leaders and appeals by heads of State. There is a need to rethink the basis of development cooperation and technology transfers, to recapture the real basis of self- reliance and the basic needs perspective – and to do this in the context of the rise of new movements and new actors on the scene." *(Kothari, 1988, p.68.)*

Susan George, writing from Paris, gets right to the heart of the matter. To answer the question of how to overcome hunger, she has a six word response; "Strengthen the weak; weaken the strong." That simple and valid recipe is not at all attractive to those in power, who control development efforts. Perhaps that is why so much development effort has neither been sustainable from the perspective of its consequences to the ecosystem, nor from the perspective of its own continuity.

Dr. George recognized that development was more than an economic, a technological, and an administrative phenomenon. Its roots are political and diplomatic. Here is how she put it: "That all governments are concerned for, and representative of the majority of their people is patent nonsense. Plenty of governments are most concerned with enriching those who keep them in power. Human rights, including the right to food, run a poor second." *(George, 1984, p.x.)*

The Other Path

And thinking in a similar direction, from half-way around the world in Peru, Hernando de Soto has produced a book entitled "*The Other Path.*" He writes: "This paradigm unifies concern for the poor, and the concerns of the poor, with the creation of a moder democracy and market economy. At the same time, it clears an area of common ground where left and right can meet. It pushes those on the right to realize that the free market is not enough, that modern political and judicial institutions must accompany liberalization if economic growth is to take place, if it is to be sustained, and if it is to be accompanied by social justice. As full participants, the poor can not only be the beneficiaries of economic growth, receiving the drops as they trickle down, but the engines of growth. To the left, paradigm has the reverse message. Capitalism is not incompatible with the elimination of poverty; it is rather the poverty of legal institutions that conspires to create the disparities that preoccuphy the left." *(de Soto, 1990, p.xx).*

Change & Contiuity

From my own perspective, the human condition includes many different groups of people, surviving in a great variety of ecological niches. From time to time, and from place to place, each is perceived as being almost isolated from the rest. And yet none of our cities, villages, hamlets, or even wandering pastoralist clans, is a closed system.

Rural life here in India, and the agriculture which sustains it, older than recorded human history, is witness to a mosaic of conflict between continuity and change. As each human group has learned the strategies for survival in its own agroecological niche, over generations of trial and error, it has also learned to institutionalize its technologies. *(Harris, 1978)* : Thus continuity defends and protects.

However, change is also constant. As shifts in such natural resources as climate, soil conditions, forests, fish and game, and available energy have occurred, human groups have changed their technologies. *(Cottrell, 1955).*

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The search for appropriate technologies and adaptive practices has fueled the forces of changes.

But since no human group remains forever isolated, since separate systems are not closed, the creative tension between continuity and change is pervasive.

Definitions

Although the literature on "development" has been growing vigorously during the past four decades, the definitions have tended to be weak, culture-bound, general, vague, or simply ignored. Some of the writers and practitioners in the field began with the term "economic development". This simplified the matter for many, and made it more straight forward. For purely economic development, such measures as gross national product (GNP), or average annual personal cash income could be used.

And the assumption of trickle down was accepted as a rationale for providing direct assistance to some, with the expectation that, over time, the benefits would trickle down to all others. *(Islam,* 1974; *Borton,* 1966; *Mosher,* 1969; *Eicher* and *Staatz,* 1984).

But even during the early years of emphasis on economic development, practitioners and scholars realized that the "less developed country" situation was not purely economic. Development of some aspects of a nation's economy could result in greater hardships for the majority of people. The reality that life is both economic and more than economic has been demonstrated through international development assistance.

Control Through Under - Development & Dependence

After the first decade of success in a few places and failure in most, thoughtful writers, particularly in Latin America, introduced the idea that underdevelopment was politically and diplomatically controlled. Former colonial powers had arranged the world so that they could extract wealth from the poorer nations, and keep them in a state of dependence, even after official independence. Writers on peasantry described center-periphery relationships from a similar perspective, while others focused on women, and addressed gender issues of inequity.

The recognition of dependency challenged the assumptions that mere capital and technical assistance would ever really result in development. But alternative strategies for appropriate interventions which were likely to result in less dependence and more inter-dependence, if not independence, were not forthcoming. (*deJanvry,* 1981; *Newby,* 1978; *Boulding,* 1977; *George,* 1984).

As Pierre Spitz (1978), writing about food aid, put it, "The dominant classes and the dominant countries must then organize a temporary transfer of resources in the opposite direction, and this enables them not only to perpetuate the existing system but also, in some cases, to reinforce it. It is a means of forestalling the developing of a political consciousness which might degenerate into social disorder. It increases the power of the donor countries which demand all kinds of services in return, and it offers wide opportunities for manoeuvring to people in key positions at the national and local levels. This form of aid is not distinguished by all these characteristics. It acquires them only because the context in which it is dispensed is that of international violence and internal inequalities within poor countries."

Who are the Beneficiaries ?

Development *vs.* Change

If one assumes that development is more than merely change, then it is necessary to specify the difference. With no change, there is no development. Thus, development could be described as change which is perceived by those who have changed, as making things better for them. If things are better now than they were before, there has been development. If things are worse than they were before, there is change, but not development.

This approach has its own frustrations. It assumes that in any "developing place", things could get better for everyone. It is perceived as not being a zero sum game. But the world experience has been that change, in fact, is like a zero sum game. As any new technology is accepted, some tend to benefit, and others tend to suffer. Typically, the technology turns out not to be scale-neutral, gender-neutral, regional-neutral, or politically neutral. Even within one particular physical location, some gain and others lose.

Rural Renaissance *vs.* Concern for & Eco-System

This frustration led the author of this paper to turn to "misery management" as an alternative to development at one point. *(Axinn, 1972).* And later, discovering that development could not be "delivered" from outside, suggested "Rural Renaissance." *(Axinn, 1974)* as the genesis for rural development.

More recently, as development activities tended to involve increased exploitation of natural resources, and perhaps more rapid degradation of the ecosystem, a broader perspective emerged. The global concern for Planet Earth as the environment for humanity resulted in broader questions.

Writing for Worldwatch Institute, Wolfe (1986) put it this way. "The world is far from having solved the problems of agricultural productivity. The conventional approach to raising productivity – combining new crop varieties with fertilizers, pesticides, and heavy use of energy – succeeded dramatically in increasing food production in industrial countries and in parts of the Third World. But new approaches are needed to reach farmers who could not afford the conventional technologies, as well as to correct the inequities in the distribution of resources and confront widespread environmental problems. Complementing the use of conventional resources with innovative biological technologies that maximize agriculture's internal resources can ensure the affordable and sustainable gains in agricultural productivity that the world needs in the years ahead."

To what extent is any particular development activity causing damage to the eco-system ? What changes are sustainable from a long-range perspective ? How does the short-run benefit of the present generation compete with

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the long-run welfare of future generations? And in the light of these questions, what is development ? When is change in the long-term interest of the human condition ?

Factors Affecting Continuity and Change in Development

If one assumes that every human group has its own technical artifacts, and that these have evolved over time in accordance with forces of continuity and change, the situation may be diagrammed *(not shown here – Ed.)*. There are various forces pushing in one direction, and countervailing forces pushing in the opposite direction. At any particular point in time, things are as they are because the forces in one direction equal the forces in the other. *(Axinn, 1988.)*

From a develoment perspective, no change occurs in a vacuum. Change results from introduction of additional force on one side, or from reduction of some force on the other.

For example, in agriculture, change to a new variety of wheat or rice usually means abandonment of an old variety. Using a new form of draft power (i.e., a tractor) requires a shift away from an old form of draft power (and the bullock becomes just another mouth to feed). Using fertile land to produce a new cash crop may require not using that land for family food production.

Role of Technology & Capital

In the context of continuity and change, what components of any particular human ecosystem are involved in development ? Much discussion of development centres on technology. People associate the introduction of a new technology with development. People also think of money as being a requirement for development. "If we could only get more investment from some outside source, development would move faster," people say.

People's Will & Innovations by Responsive Authorities

Well, technology and money may be part of it, but the last fifty years have demonstrated that those are only a small part. More significant are people's determination to make things better for themselves; the accountability of those in power to those they propose to help develop; people's willingness and ability to change their cultural patterns, their administrative patterns, their educational systems, and sometimes their political systems. These are all part of development. Put another way, development involves change in all aspects of any system which is developing. It is much more than merely technical, or merely economic. That's why a system's approach is so essential for sustainability.

While greater understanding of the relevant forces is not a guarantee that more will benefit and fewer will suffer, or that what seems like a zero-sum game may be converted to increased benefits for all; it does offer promise to academics trying to understand the process. And, to the extent that they succeed, it may even be useful to practitioners.

The promise of such scholarship, optimistically, might be a response to Tagore's questions; "Progress toward what? Progress for whom ?

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A GANDHIAN DILEMMA

Ravindra Varma :
FIVE FALLACIES—AND THE FUTURE

Comment by T K N. Unnithan

In this small book, '*Five Fallacies and the Future*', Mr. Ravindra Varma, former President of the Indian Students' Congress during the Nehru days and Minister of Labour and Parliamentary Affairs during Morarji Desai's Prime Ministership and currently Chairman of the Gandhi Peace Foundation, explodes some Gandhian myths, which cast a mist over the tremendous potentialities of the Gandhian model for social reconstruction. The fallacious notions of some of the followers of Gandhi are detrimental to the correct interpretation of Gandhian ideas and actions. In order to keep the multi-pronged Gandhian model dynamic and relevant to contemporary social issues, it is necessary to transcend such fallacious views and interpretations, according to Mr. Varma. It is the ambivalence and misconceptions of some of the Gandhians that have provoked Mr. Varma to openly challenge their positions.

SARVODAYA & THE POLITICS OF ELECTIONS

In the author's own words : "Some months ago, I had an opportunity to attend a meeting of prominent Sarvodaya workers from different parts of the country. The purpose of the meeting was to look at the General Elections that were due, and to exchange views on whether those who claimed to follow Gandhi had any special role or duty in the ensuing elections. The views that were expressed covered a very wide spectrum : some holding that those who followed Gandhi could have nothing to do with politics and elections; some holding that it would be dereliction of duty not to work openly for the removal of the party in power. Almost all those who spoke—with one or two exceptions—had no doubt that the Government had to faith in Gandhian values or in Gandhian concepts of development or in a non-violent society. They believed that the Government was taking the country on the path to ruin. Many of them recalled that the Sarva Seva Sangh itself had, in an earlier resolution, described the Government and its policies as 'anti-people'. No one would want an anti-people Government to continue; but the question was whether one should not only wish that the Government disappeared; but also work to see that the electorate seized the opportunity and removed the Government by voting against it, by voting for the Opposition. Some held the view that to speak against the Government and ask the electorate to reject the ruling party and vote for the Opposition would be to enter the field of politics, which is taboo for the followers of Gandhi.

There was no clear answer to the question. If they had already characterised the Government as 'anti-people', why should they fight shy of saying so to the electrorate ? If the Government is anti-people, and they do not want anti-people regimes to rule in the name of the people, do they have no duty to tell the electorate to avail of the specific opportunity that the elections gave them, to remove an anti-people government from power ?"

FUNDAMENTALIST GANDHIAN VIEWS—FIVE FALLACIES

The Five Fallacies the author has pointed out are : (1) the belief that Gandhi was against participation in politics and wanted his followers to shun politics, (2) the idea that Gandhiji's concept of Satyagraha and the methods of struggle were only to be used against the foreign rulers, (3) the notion that Gandhi considered compromise and concensus as paramount objectives. (4) the idea that Gandhiji considered political parties as irrelevant, Gandhians should not take part in electoral politics etc. and (5) the Gandhians' tendency to overlook the right and wrong of an issue merely because both contesting parties are using means that are unacceptable to a Satyagrahi.

Ravindra Verma cogently argues and brilliantly exposes these fallaciee, thus challenging the fundamentalist view of Gandhi. This masterpiece, to my mind, is as important to Gandhian movement as the Communist Manifesto to the communist movement. '*The Five Fallacies and the Future*' heralds a new era for free enquiry in the realm of Gandhian movement and a Gandhian model of social order.

The book deserves the attention of all those who are interested in the reconstruction of humanity. (Priced at Rs. 3/- it is available from Gandhi Vichar Parishad, Gandhi Gyan Mandir, Wardha-442001.)

Professor T. K. N. Unnithan is former Vice-Chancellor, Rajasthan University and a distinguished Visiting Professor, Gujarat Vidyapith.

BOOKS RECEIVED

RAWAT PUBLICATIONS

3-NA-20, Jawahar Nagar, Jaipur–302004 (Raj.)

Verma S. L. : **Panchayati Raj, Gram Swaraj and Federal Polity**

Dave M. : **Urban Ecology & Levels of Development**

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Dreams . . . for Ever

Prem Kirpal : DREAMS IN SOLITUDE

Pitambar Publishing Co. (New Delhi)

Comments by Man Mohan Singh

Dreams alone are beyond the imperatives of space and time. Their kingdom is beyond the sway of words and consciousness. You cannot will what you shall dream. It is this condition of dreams that Prem Kripal has to reckon with in this sequence of "*Dreams in Solitude*".

A CASCADE OF WORDS & IMAGES

Prem Kirpal's poetry is like a cascade with its swinging lace of drops as its alphabet and sheets of transparent water as its lines. They fall from the cliffs in an act of baptising and waking up the stones to the music of times and eternity. The cover of the book designed by Santosh Jain, visually depicts the "kingdom of dreams" with cactii, hills and images of a waterfall lacing the landscape and fossilised flowers embedded as metaphors in layers of memory.

If the poems are in the inexorable logic of dreams a bit too ethereal, the Preface and Introduction provide quite a statement of meaning and purpose to this articulation of dreams. In fact, rarely would you find any-where in prose a packaged philosophical density so terse and profound as this overture to his symphony in dreams.

Why Dreams in Solitude ? The poet explains : "The state of solitude often releases dreams to roam in the vast world of the soul's vision and these poems partake of such a savour of dreams in solitude."

FIVE DIMENSIONS OF LIFE

In a sense, this sequence is like variations on a theme of love, time and eternity. The poet explains five dimensions of life : the sensuous the intellectual, the rational, the aesthetic and the spiritual. According to him, corresponding to these dimensions. the attachments and objects of life are the women, the idea, the insight, the beautiful and the soul. In what flows down from the cliff of poetic imagination in a sequence of poems is a fusion of all the dimensions and the five senses of life. For, essentially the one remains, the other pass away.

The rationality of dreams is explored in this compilation on the presumption that dreams have a reason beyond the logic of earthly senses. The collage of images in a cosmic sweep touches the metaphors of *Maya* and illusion, time and eternity and the paradoxes of "sleepless sleep of night". In this inimitable way, Prem Kirpal etherealises as well as grounds these airy nothings of the "kingdom of dreams". In that sense, these are also landscape poems; for they have earthy and known habitats like Puri, Vrindavan, Goa and the Lodi Gardens with their cartographic bearings in the Indian landscape. In that sense, the paradox of the earthy and the ethereal is resolved in giving dreams names and habitats.

In this exquisite articulation of time and space images, the poet explores the transition of time into eternity and the spatial limits of thought. Come September as in "September Images", the timeless moments are related to the timeless past. In a sense, it is a statement of continuum as well as containment. It is, as if the verticality of eternity is intersected and arrested by horizontal time.

In "A Moment", time and space are walled in a poetic metaphor :

> Time stands still at this moment
> and space is all contained
> in the four walls of my room,
> and the mind that lies dormant
> brooding over the time that has passed,
> and the space that was experienced.
> reflecting rays of light to come,
> and the sound of loving voices
> echoing before they are said.

PHILOSOPHY MINGLED WITH THE MADNESS OP LOVE

It is in the encounters of the romantic kind that the poet transforms the abstract into the intimate. It is when body and soul mingle in an act of spiritual consummation. The predominant philosophical heaviness of these poems is relieved occasionally by indulgences in love "with the measure of madness and folly". For this one has to fling, as a poet says, "discretion to the wind", as also to forget old age and the realities of a grey bald head.

In "Recalling Long Lost Past", the mermaid of Mahabalipuram emerges as if from the froth and waves of the Bay of Bengal. That is where the poet left a dream girl in 1954. The poet looks back and recalls :

> Blue skies of magic colour,
> and the sun's golden light
> shimmering on sparkling seawaves
> which lashed against the coast
> where we walked hand in hand.

In a major poem about Mini, a moment of love is plucked as if from a galaxy of memories. This is where the poet celebrates a deeply personal attachment in "To dear Mini—on her Birthday." On her

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birthday, the poet's reveries take wings as memories smoulder :

Many derires have flown, some flames extinguished
by yawning space and time, the reaper,
but a little star persists and grows ever brighter
to sustain life which becomes deeper and mellower.

BIRDS COME & COO

In an enunciation of time and space, birds do inevitably fly in, for they so deftly link in the language of wings, their roots in the treebound nests and their reach for the sky. The poet refers to the open and free world of the birds which is beyond the bonds of time.

In yet another transmutation of this image, birds sing and dance in the urgency of monsoon rains.

In a beautiful image of birds, the predator birds and the birds that are hunted, dance together achieving harmony in the mind's kingdom. Surprisingly this image occurs in a poem called "The Topsy-Turvy." Apparently, this world, as the poet seems to imply, would achieve a greater measures of order if it really were to turn topsy-turvy. The kingdom of birds is not shackled as "In Lodi Garden" :

Birds come and go and make their nests,
sing their songs and fly without fear.

TANTRIC & ESOTERIC IMAGES OF UNION

As one moves in this array of images towards the finale and the crescendo, the tantric and the esoteric images of the universe, of the seed and the *kundalini* are brought in. The seed and the womb, the lotus and the *kundalini*, the male and the female are celebrated in the union of the seed with the earth and in the merging of man with woman.

JOINING THE OPPOSITES & THE BEGINNING WITH THE END

There is yet time towards the end to resolve contradictions; to integrate the philosophical poles and to explore the unconscious as in "The Challenges of the Unconscious".

"Existence and essence,
fantasy and reality,
passion and reason
unity and duality,
live intensely in the unconscious
and also in the concious
Can man yoke these forces together
to know, express and transcend ?

The last poem aptly titled "Prologue" ends on a personal note and refers to fellow travellers and golden moments. This is like a poetic arc that joins the two ends of the spectrum; the beginning and the end of an odyssey.

In Prem Kirpal's triumphant assertion of the ethereal, it is not the diamonds but dreams that are for ever.

Mr. Man Mohan Singh is Joint Secretary in the Department of Culture, Ministry of Human Resources, New, Delhi.

[**Reproduced from The Tribune, Chandigarh, Saturday, July 7, 1990, Courtesy Editor*]

We Wish Our Readers
A Happy New Year & Happy Dreams ! *Eds*

TWO POEMS *by* Anna Alexander

JANUARY 1991

Snow falls silently, rythmically,
In an avalanche of whiteness.

Somewhere else,
The earth is not blessed
With such beauty.

Instead, slashes of the sword
Rip the earth till it bleeds.

A red river,
Borne by terror,
Flows into the Gulf of Persia.

★

LAMENTATION

Why do I walk all day long,
Wrapped in a blood-stained cloak
Of agony ?

The rainbow in my painting opens
As if to take me in,
And a brilliant star
Shines below it radiantly.

Then night falls.
Every one of the stars
On the curtain of the black sky
Will help me to reach Heaven
I vow to myself.

This death is a slow and painful one
And I sigh and sob
As the image of the Crucifix
Nails me daily
To the Cross of Calvary.

Miss Anna Alexander is a fresh poetical voice from Kerala.

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LAND : THE BASE OF POWER

Rajendra Singh : LAND, POWER and PEOPLE— Rural Elites in Transition (1801–1970)

Sage Publications (India) Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi (1988) Pp. 264; Rs. 195/-

Reviewed by A. Satyanarayna

Rarely does one come across a strikingly different book, which provides a unique sense of breakthrough in the domains of rural sociology. The book under review, *Land, Power and People*, makes a significant contribution in the field study of social stratification, political sociology and social change in rural India. The interaction between Land, Power and People has been intensively examined to comprehend the genesis of, and changes in the structure of power and authority in Basti District, where the people are predominently dependant on the primary sector of production.

The scholarly work also raises many significant and important issues at conceptual, empirical and methodological levels. Through 'reputational approach', the author has observed a pattern in the relationship of lineages, landownership or control, power and ideas; and has also established that the earlier works on power structure based on 'positional approach' revealed only the mere appearance, and also obscured the underlying reality.

ELITES & LEADERS: RESERVOIRS & OCCUPIERS OF POWER

The book is divided into six chapters. The first chapter deals with both substantive and methodological issues related to the rural elites specifically and agrarian power structure in general. The author has emphasized the institutional and structural aspects of 'power' rather than its manifestations in positions or offices. He has also distinguished between 'elites' and 'leaders' In his own words, elites are relatively stable; they usually function in an autonomous manner; use traditional symbols and institutions to maintain their power and control over the leaders" Thus, elites are treated as power reservoirs. Leaders are relatively less stable, usually dependent on elites for their power and influence. Thus, leaders are treated as 'occupiers' of formal positions.

The elites not only own and control land, hut also socio-cultural symbols like temples, idols of gods and deities. In contemporary period, they control patronage distributing institutions like schools and colleges.

Methods and aspects of the field of study are covered in the second chapter, wherein Dr. Rajendra Singh has adopted a holistic approach with linkages to historical social processes and ethnographic description 'Home-made models' of power are linked with scientific models, along with manifested symbols of elites rigorously. In the study, he took a number of precautions at the stage of identification of elites, and also to find out its representativeness and authenticity.

RAJPUT COLONISERS & THE FOREST PEOPLE

It would appear that the ethnic movement of Rajput lineages, with the transportation of their structural and cultural values, coerced the relatively weak, indigenous population of the forests in the initial phases, and later, through consensus, established their (Rajput) hegemony in this area. The uprooted 'natives' lived either in bondage to the Rajput colonisers, or they migrated northwards to the forests of Nepal. Thus the early colonisers of this area had only control over land. Brahmans, the maintainers of culture and the providers of services to rulers, got their grants in land and exercised their power on the basis of normative structure; but others had /have only 'shares' in the agricultural produce. Thus the Rajput lineages, along with the Brahmans, not only controlled land, but also exercised power on their 'subjects', initially through coercion and later, through cultural notions.

ALIENATION PROCESS & OFFICIAL PATRONACE

The British introduced 'alien' notions of property, ownership, rent, revenue and tax, along with political-legal authority and scientific measurement of land and the assessment of land revenue which not only affected the 'traditional' concept of 'shares in produce'; but the process also led to an outburst of anger by a section of Rajputs against the systematic increase in the land revenue and the loss of 'revenue free' villages. The other section of Rajputs preferred British rule to the possible rule of Muslim Kings and *Nawabs*. Such a process of variational reactions to the above-mentioned phenomenon needs an intensive exploration in any future inquiry.

Brahmans, holders of 'birt' land, too became *Zamindars*, and came in direct control of British Administration like their *maliks*. Initially, the Britishers sold the *darbars*, titles and honours to loyal influential persons, mainly on the basis of ascriptive criteria and without affecting the nexus of old patterns of land-power-and-people relationship.

THE NEW ELITE GROUPS

In the 20th century, however, recruitment to elite positions was accessible to other castes too, on the basis of achievement criterion, like their performance in the modern educational system,

Soon, new elites appeared on the power scene, who opposed both the British Raj and Zamindars in India through the Indian National Congress, which increasingly articulated the interests of peasants. Both the elites have had predominantly ex-*Raja* or ex-*Darbari*

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TAKING STOCK *(Contd. from inside first cover page)*

has grown, as also the growing tally of our contributors and supportive scholars, which occasionally causes extra strain on our skelton office staff? Given the support, and the opportunity to raise our print order, their number can swell up much more.

P.S. There are still scores of books with us awaiting to be despatched to prospective but willing reviewers, We suggest that our reveiwers may again give us some idea of their interests or disciplines, so that these books may be sent out early.

[We regret the unfortunate delay in releasing this number. February and March issues are in the pipe line. –Editors]

LAND : THE BASE OF POWER

(Contd from 24 page)

family background. But the middle-age group elites belong to various castes and communities. The latter sections have a tendency to retire early as compared to the elites with traditional advantage. Thus the power of Brahmins and Rajputs has remained as an unbroken extention from the past to the present.

VARYING PERCEPTIONS

Brahmans presume that they relied more on their 'ritual status' as the source of their power, and less on economic and other sources, while Rajputs seek their power more from their possession of land and from the exercise of physical power over others, than from positions of power.

The governmental democratic measures in India to establish and strengthen an egalitarian social structure are further helping the powerful sections to safe-guard their traditional sources of power. Thus. power drawn from the historical sources of cultural traditions, ownership and control of large tracts of land, with the priveleges and life-chances differential accrued out of colonical rule, tends to have a longer permanence and continuity in comparison to the power drawn exclusively from modern democratic institutions. The positional power lacks autonomy in comparison to the power anchored in land and caste normative structure. The leaders who mobilized peasants against the colonial rulers and their supporters, have ultimately become appendages of the entrenched elites and are emulating their life-style.

This book is a valuable contribution to the field of sociology, especialy rural sociolgy. Students of sociology and social history in general, political and rural sociology in particular, will find it very useful.

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Books Received from Writers' Workshop

162/92, Lake Gardens CALCUTTA 700045

1. **Inderjit Hazra** : TWENTY FOUR POEMS
2. **Bibhas De** : IN WINTER ONCE
3. **Tom Jone** : FOOTBRIDCE TO INDIA
4. **Kulwant Singh Gill** : BEYOND THE SPECTRUM
5. **Biswakesh Tripathi** : ANTICIPATIONS
6. **Harbhajan Singh Hundel** : THE DECISIVE MOMENT
7. **Pritam Singh** : STRAY THOUGHTS
8. **Pratap Nambiar** : OVER THE YEARS
9. **Anasuya Shenoy** : ANTUMN LEAVES
10. **S. Anand** : POEMS
11. **Brinda Mukerjee** : THE FOURTH PROFILE
12. **P. Lal** : THE NEW MISCELLANY
13. **P. Lal** : THE TYRANNY OF IRONY
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A Play on Mahatma Gandhi

S. K. Ojha : RIDING THE STORM

Sterling Publishers (Pvt.) Ltd New Delhi (1990) pp. 90; Rs. 75/-

Comments by Ranbir Sinh

Unboubtedly Mr. S.K. Ojha elected to ride a storm when he chose to write a play on Mahatma Gandhi. As he says in the Preface, "to confine to a stage the activities of a man, spread over three continents and thirty years, is a challenge to the World of Theatre". In accepting this challenge, Ojha has met his Waterloo. A business executive by profession, he is a free-lance writer who has written 4 novel and a one-act play on Subhash Chandra Bose He has attended an advanced course in writing for films and T. V. at New York University.

Writing for the stage has to be very intense and concise. Stage has its one big limitation and that is of time. All that the play wright wants to say, he has to say in just about two and a half hours. In the given space and time, the story and the characters must develop to their full and reach an ultimate end.

Having selected a vast canvas to write upon, Ojha has allowed himself to be lost in the maze. He has to tried to get clear of the obstacles, as he admits, by weaving the episodes around Mahatma Gandhi; but unfortunately, each episode stands in isolation and does not weave a clear, concise, and dramatic picture which is the essential element of a good stageable play. It would have been much better if Ojha had selected one of the episodes from the long political life of Mahatma Gandhi and written intensely and dramatically on it The play has remained "episodical". It appears that Ojha got confused between writing a play or a screen-play for a movie. As he admits himself "A movie screen is more apt to depict his (Gandhi's) epic life."

As Elliot Norton puts it, "On the printed page, the best play is only a sleeping beauty waiting to be wakened by actors and a director". To "awaken" a play, an intimate relationship and close understanding between the playwright and the director is very important. It is the director who ultimately presents it on the stage in a communicable and dramatic manner. The good and stageable plays are not written in the study, but on the stage. That art always is provided by the director. Not having the facilities of a professional theatre in India, this relation-ship between the playwright and the director is most of the time, not well established, and the playwright assumes the duty of the director, and thus in advertently falls into the trap created by himself. S.K. Ojha is an unfortunate victim of this pitfall.

The play *Riding the Strom* fails to present the brave and the heroic rider that Gandhi was and also the fierce storms he faced.

Shri Ranbir Sinh is a play-wright, actor and director associated with I P.T.A. Jaipur.

Corrections

In the Poets' Corner, (P. 24 Nov. 1990. Vol. XV No. 11) there were some printers' errors in 2 poems by Pratap Sinh Shewale. We reprint them.

(—Eds.)

THE BEYOND

I want to grow
But there is no soil,
I want to flow
But there is no river,
I want to blow
But there is no vacuum,
I want to fly
But there is no sky,
I want to swim
But there is no sea,
I want to be true
But there is diplomacy,
I want to love
But there is business,
I want to live
But there is no life,
I want to transcend
But there is no Beyond.

THE LEGENDARY PECULIAR

This is a legend of a peculiar
Of a very peculiar peculiar
Satire was his appearance
Irony was his gait
Parody was his tongue
His thinking was caricature
He saw nothing in the world irregular
Yes, of a typical peculiar
This is a legend of a peculiar
Of a very peculiar peculiar ... (1)

He loved the love
He hated the hatred
He fought against the wars
He made peace with the peace
He was a cross-breed of saint and philosopher
Yes, of a queer peculiar
This is a legend of a peculiar ... (2)

He kissed his worries
He smooched his dejections
He screwed his sorrows
But found that hope was also a whore
Yes, of a wierd peculiar
This is a legend of a peculiar
Of a very peculiar peculiar ... (3)

He went with his horoscope to bureaucrats
Ran with his degrees to astrologers
Licked politicians to be an IAS
Begged for coudsel to beggars
And then found a job with a smuggler
Yes, of the strange peculiar

This was the legend of the peculiar
of the very peculiar peculiar.

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Indian Book Chronicle

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GANDHI AND SCHWEITZER : HOW ALIKE !

A Review of Their Autobiographical Writings

by Mohinder Singh

My uniform experience has convinced me that there is no other God than Truth." *(Gandhi)*

"One belief of my childhood I have preserved with the certainty that I can never lose it: belief in truth."
(Schweitzer)

"Man cannot for a moment live without consciously or unconsciously committing outward *Himsa*. The very act of his living – eating, drinking and moving about – necessarily involves some *Himsa*, destruction of life, be it ever so minute. A votary of *Ahimsa* therefore remains true to his faith if the spring of all his actions is compassion, if he shuns to the best of his ability the destruction of the tiniest creature, tries to save it..." *(Gandhi)*

"He (man) is subject to the puzzling and horrible law of being obliged to live at the cost of other life, and to incur, again and again, the guilt of destroying and injuring life. To the man who is truly ethical, all life is sacred, including that which, from the human point of view, seems lower in the scale. He makes distinctions only as each case comes before him, and under the pressure of necessity." *(Schweitzer)*

Two of the greatest men of modern times, M.K. Gandhi and Dr. Albert Schweitzer were near contemporaries. Gandhi was born in 1869 and Schweitzer in 1875. An assasin's bullets cut down Gandhi's messianic career, may be, by a good ten years. The doctor was blessed to live in the service of humanity till ninety. The two men admired each other, read each other, yet failed to meet – evidently too immersed, almost stuck in their life-and-soul demanding locale, whether it was rural India or tropical Africa. C.F. Andrews provided the living link between them.

Comparing great men – and for that matter, these two most complex personalities – is a questionable enterprise. It could well be made out that a hunt for similarities, real or superficial, between two noble lives would net some yield. Yet, one is almost charmed into seeking similarities between the two, based primarily on their autobiographical writings. Both wrote a regular autobiography (in their middle-age) and have left a host of other autobiographical material. Both are **men of truth,** and both are given to intensive introspection and searching self- analysis. So what they write about themselves is possibly the nearest to truth, notwithstanding the proverbial imperfections and distortions "inadequate ex-parte evidence."

SO DIFFERENT YET SO ALIKE

Some one could start by stating that Gandhi and Schweitzer were two very different beings; their dissimilarities almost striking and galore. Yes ! But even in their dissimilarities, a sort of similarity peeps through.

Diverse Backgrounds & Personal Traits

They hail from divergent background: Asian as against European. Gandhi's family was in administration and business, Schweitzer's in preaching and teaching. However, both enjoyed middle-class origins, and both had their childhood and adolescence free from want and deprivation.

If Gandhi is small and spare, Schweitzer is big and robust. If one is a lark (early riser); the other is an owl (literally burning midnight oil). Yet both are unbelievably energetic and defy fatigue. Ever hurrying through their press of work, with schedules gruelling enough to kill an ox. Jails rest Gandhi. "In His Majesty's Hotels" he finds "a relaxation from the intolerable weight of responsibilities". Schweitzer calls out, "If I went on holiday, I would soon find out how I tired I am." While Gandhi trained himself for law, Schweitzer grew to be a reputed scholar and thinker by his late twenties. On piano he was a master.

Austeriy & Suffering

With Gandhi, experiments around food, drink, fasting, self-cures and sex have an elemental importance. To Schweitzer, these aspects are somewhat incidental, secondary. Yet both veered round to a life of spartan simplicity and monk-like austerity; Gandhi's tinged with asceticism, Schweitzer's coloured by ethical rationalism

Gandhi was fated to suffer particular traumas of beatings and racial humiliations. Schweitzer was spared such horrors, but his cup of suffering was no less full. "In my own life, anxiety, trouble, and sorrow have been allotted to me in such abundant measure that, had my nerves not been so strong, I must have broken down under the weight."

Married Life – Partners & Parents

Gandhi, in his pursuit of truth, does not flinch from taking us into confidence about his relations with his wife or his sex life (whatever it was). Schweitzer is far more reticent. Gandhi was married too early, Schweitzer married rather late. Whereas Kasturba was progressively drawn into her husband's life-mission, Helene Schweitzer was a full-fledged workmate from the outset, and had specially qualified herself as a nurse. Yet both the marriages are undeniably enriched by love, understanding and mutual

(Continued)

* **Gandhi:** *An Autobiography or The Story of My Experiments with Truth Satyagraha in South Africa*

* **Schweitzer** : *My Life and Thought, An autobiography On the Edge of the Primeval Forest More from the Primeva Forest From my African Notebook.*

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respect. Incidentally, both couples had to undergo prolonged periods of compelling separation.

"My grief was greater than over my father's death," says Gandhi when he learnt of his mother's demise. "Most of my cherished hopes were shattered. But I remember I did not give myself up to any wild expressions of grief." For Schweitzer, his father was "his dearest friend." My mother was knocked down and killed in 1916 by cavalry horses on the road", he writes with 'a dreadful brevity'.

THEIR AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL WRITINGS

Gandhi is possibly a keener narrator and story-teller, while Schweitzer is more at home in propounding ideas. Yet both wrote with extreme economy and simplicity. They had painstakingly drilled themselves to be precise, not to waste words like avoiding all other waste. They are meticulous in translations and extra careful with their interpreters.

Religion, Politics & Missionary Medicine

At that point in history, Gandhi had to become increasingly involved against racialism and colonialism – a man of God sucked into the wider spectrum of politics. "Those who say that religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion means." Schweitzer's field is missionary medicine, theology, philosophy and music, all aided by a scientific temper. Whereas Gandhi helped his hapless people to shed their fright of rulers, Schweitzer helped the natives to overcome their dread of superstition. However, as the two men advanced in their work, their interests mark a certain convergence. "My aptitude for nursing gradually developed into a passion, so much so that it often led me to neglect my work; and on such occasions, I not only engaged my wife but the whole household in such service," says Gandhi.

Boer War, World War I, Zulu 'Rebellion', Black Plague, home or outside, Gandhi nursed the sick. He had taken a year's training for it. Comparative religions he studies and ponders; turns his ear to religious music. On the other hand, Schweitzer a medical man, is drawn more and more into the realm of world peace and politics. And the views of both men ring refreshingly similar on racialism and colonalism.

On Ahimsa, Passive Resistance & Satyagraha

In his *'Indian Thought'*, Schweitzer is somewhat critical of Gandhi's *Ahimsa*. He has presumably in mind the practical implications of a situation where masses of men and women are thrown into the political fray.

"Passive resistance is a non-violent use of force. The idea is that, by circumstances brought about without violence, pressure is brought to bear on the opponent, and he is forced to yield. Being an attack that is more difficult to parry than active attack, passive resistance may be the more successful method. But there is also a danger that this concealed application of force may cause more bitterness than an open use of violence. In any case the difference between passive and active resistance is only quite relative..."

Gandhi had long dropped the word 'passive-resistance', and is at pains to clarify the same.

"...While there is no scope for love in passive resistance, on the other hand, not only has hatred no place in

Satyagraha, but it is a positive breach of its ruling principle... *Satyagraha* can be offered to one's nearest and dearest; passive resistance can never be offered to them unless, of course, they have ceased to be dear and become an object of hatred to us. In passive resistance, there is always present an idea of harassing the other party...; while in *Satyagraha* there is not the remotest idea of injuring the opponent. *Satyagraha* postulates the conquest of the adversary by suffering in one's person....."

SIMILARITIES

And now all those likenesses and similarities between the two: fundamental and secondary, and in matters consequential and incidental.

Restless Souls in Service of the Poor & Suffering

Both are conscious of being blessed; "on whom the Master's eye already rested" *(Schweitzer)*. And both are restless in alleviating suffering of others; "to wipe every tear from every eye" *(Gandhi)*. They go to succour the lowliest and the neediest; Gandhi has his harijans and Schweitzer his lepers. They are kindred spirits who "bear the mark of pain" *(Schweitzer)*.

They are deedmakers, not talkers; fully in tune with Goethe's words, "In the beginning was the Deed". No activity is considered too low. Schewitzer sums the whole approach like this: "Only a person who can find value in every sort of activity and devote himself to each one with full consciousness of duty, has the inward right to take as his object some extraordinary activity, instead of that which falls naturally to his lot."

Versatile & Manifold Personalites

As a consequence, both are versatile men. Housebuilders, agriculturists, fruit – growers, carpenters, shoemakers, writers, thinkers, beside being professionals. Both place high moral value on agricultural work and crafts. And both are well aware of the perils of propagating social reform. "...Without infinite patience, it was impossible to get the people to do any work. It is the reformer who is anxious to reform, and not society, from which he should expect nothing better than opposition, abhorrence and even mortal persecution," says Gandhi. Schweitzer voices in a similar strain, "Anyone who proposes to do good must not expect people to roll stones out of his way, but must accept his lot calmly if they even roll a few more upon it."

Compassionate, Ethical & Tolerant

Their compassion is soul-stirring – flowing from *Ahimsa* or Reverence for Life and extending to God's every living creature, down to plants and trees. "To my mind, the life of a lamb is no less precious than that of a human being... I hold that the more helpless a creature, the more entitled, it is to protection by man from the cruelty of man," says Gandhi in anguish at seeing lambs slaughtered. "The rule of not killing venomous reptiles has been practised for the most part of Phoenix, Tolstoy Farm and Sabarmati. At each of these places, we had to settle on wastelands. We have had, however, no loss of life occasioned by a snakebite... for twenty-five years." When his friend Kallenbach experiments with keeping a cobra as a pet. Gandhi has his reservations. "Therefore, though there is friendliness, there is no love in this act of taming the cobra. Our behaviour should be such that the cobra can see through it."

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SCHWEITZER

"Before a pile is lowered (and Schweitzer lowered hundreds of them) into the pit, I look whether any ants or toads or other creatures have fallen into it, and if so, I take them out with my hands", says Schweitzer. In his study-bedroom, he hangs his manuscripts by nails to keep them out of the reach of his paper- eating pet antelope. "We burden ourselves with some extra work out of compassion for the palm-trees with which the site of our future home is crowded... carry heavy palm-trees about so that they may live instead of being cut down." Schweitzer elaborates the idea as follows.

"That man is truly ethical who shatters no ice-crystal as it spakles in the sun, tears no leaf from a tree, cuts no flower... The farmer who has mown down a thousand flowers in his meadow to feed his cows, must be careful on his way home not to strike off in heedless pastime the head of a single flower by the roadside..."

As an extension of the same, both display superhuman tolerance towards others, particularly towards those who oppose or criticise them. And this is combined with an extraordinary effort to appreciate the opponent's point of view. Again, accompanied by unflagging courtesy, solicitude and friendly gestures. It is no wonder they rarely made a personal enemy despite their controversy-ridden ideas and unorthodox actions.

Without Fear

Their personalities get moudled in such a manner that they are devoid of any physical fear, "Perfect love casteth fear". On being threatened with death by an infuriated Pathan in South Africa, Gandhi responds, "Death is the appointed end of all life. To die by the hand of a brother, rather than by disease or in such other way, cannot be for me a matter of sorrow." And it was no empty threat. Ultimately Gandhi was assaulted badly.

Dr. Schweitzer is called at night to see a mentally-diseased woman bound to a palm-tree in the forest wilderness. "I ordered them to set her free which they did, but with timidity and hesitation. The woman no sooner free, than she sprang at me in order to seize my lamp and throw it away. The natives fled with shrieks in every direction and would not come any near..."

Religious : Mystic & Rational

Both men are deeply religious—in its widest sense — their religion a special mix of mysticism and rationalism. Gandhi's relationship to God is possibly more intense. Schweitzer's strength lies in his insight into Theology. "For it is an unbroken torture to me that I am still so far from Him, who, as I fully know, governs every breath of my life," say Gandhi.

"The man who thinks, stands up freer in the face of traditional religious truth than the man who does not, but the profound and imperishable elements contained in it, he assimilates with much more effect than the latter," says Schweitzer.

The two men are most highly individualistic; almost loners. And both encounter an element of affectionate mockery : Gandhi for his fads especially on food, Schweitzer, some assumed, was "not quite right in his head". Both earn epithets like old-fashioned, primitive.

Leadership Styles

Their style of leadership is such that accusations of being autocratic are frequently heard. Outside organisations and agencies are rather chary of admitting these veritable dynamos into their midst. On the urging of Gokhale, Gandhi applied for a membership of the Servants of India Society. "The section that was opposed to me held that they and I were as the poles assunder in various vital matters and they felt that my membership was likely to imperil the very objects for which the society was founded." And that was despite Gandhi's assurance that he will respect and tolerate opposing views. "The withdrawl of my application made me truly a member of the Society," he philosophizes in his inimitable manner.

When Schweitzer applies for the membership of the Paris Mission, there is opposition from the orthodox members. "It cost me several afternoons making a personal visit to each member of the Mission" (in a group, his case would have been easily lost.) "On my assurance that I only wanted to be a doctor and that as to everything else I would be *muet comme une carpe* (as mute as a fish), their fears were dispelled." Still one member "sent in his resignation".

Secret of Their Greatness

The greatness of these two greats rests not only on their tangible achievements, but the example they set in : that unique integrity of thought and action which awakens idealism in others. People who hear of them or come in contact with them are attracted to emulate. Whole lifestyles get changed. Volunteers come forward and dedicated workers develop; Gandhi's field being vaster and general, such numbers are a legion.

Sense of Humour

A strong sense of humour, an indicator of self-confidence, enlivens the lives and struggles of both these men; to an extent this sustains them. In the midst of dire circumstances and hopeless odds they can smile, they can joke, they can laugh. Gandhi's humour, puckish at times, is somewhat subdued; possibly more in evidence in gestures and conversation than in writing. Schweitzer can be boisterous and a jovial host. His writings are sprinkled with wit and humorous sallies.

The Woes of a Mahatma... & of Our Doctor

Gandhi is pained at the Benares holy scene. His *pie* (the lowest Indian coin then extant) is finally accepted by the *panda* (priest) in charge, with a volley of abuse. "Since then I have twice been to Kashi Vishwanath but that has been after I had already been afflicted with the title of Mahatma... People eager to have my *darshan* would not permit me to have a *darshan* of the temple. The woes of Mahatmas are known to Mahatama alone... If any one doubts the infinite mercy of God, let him have a look at these sacred places. How much hypocrisy and irreligion does the Prince of Yogis suffer to be perpetrated in His holy name?"

Gandhi was possibly never stretched so much in his life as when he was leading the historic march in South Africa. Arrested by a magistrate while distributing bread to the merchers, he quips, "It would seem I have received a promotion in rank, as magistrates take the trouble to arrest me instead of mere police officials." *(Continued)*

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Here is Schweitzer frantically collecting leaf-tiles to give the hospital and patients a roof. "But the flattery and the presents I had to distribute in order to be able to take these leaf-tiles away with me is something I should like to forget. I even go so far as to threaten that if people will not meet my requests I will never treat any sick people from that village. But such threats coming from 'our Doctor' were only greeted with laughter. Even my moral principles are deteriorating. Just as a boy I asked every aunt who came to visit us whether she had brought along a present for me, so now I am asking for leaf- tiles from everyone with whom I have anything to do."

Due to sudden rains, some timber had to be brought under cover. "As we have in the hospital hardly a man capable of work, I begin, assisted by two loyal helpers to haul beams and planks about myself. Suddenly I catch sight of a negro in a white suit sitting by a patient whom he has come to visit. "Hullo! friend," I call out, "won't you lend a hand?" "I am 'an intellectual' and don't drag wood about," came the answer. "You're lucky," I reply. "I too wanted to become 'an intellectual' but I didn't succeed." (And this coming from a world's leading intellectual).

Besieged by newsmen while visiting to receive the Nobel Prize, he sighs, "Yes, I am a new variety of African elephant, one whom they hunt not with guns but with cameras."

Outsiders ... on the Stage of African Drama

Incidental and accidental similarities between the two men are interestingly numerous. Only a few obvious and known ones can be recounted here. Both were outsiders, yet for both, Africa became a crucial theatre of work. "Africa, where I had realized by vocation in life", says Gandhi. To Schweitzer it is "his home".

Geographically (through not racially) Gandhi was luckier; he lived in the beautiful, temperate veld country. Himself hailing from a cooler clime, Schweitzer spent nearly half a century in the oppressive tropical heat of Africa, with precious little to mitigate the climatic harshness.

Gandhi was returning to India for good after a year in Africa. On his farewell day, a chance reading by him of a small newspaper item pertaining to local Indians being disenfranchised, led to his change of plans. There his destiny was cast and he stayed on for over two decades.

Schweitzer had accidentally come upon a magazine write-up appealing for doctors to come and work in Gabon. "My search was over," says he. He begins studying medicine; he's already turned thirty.

Their Vow: Sharing the Burden of Others

Gandhi has those awesome vows, the first ones taken on his mother's behest, the rest on his inner urgings.

Schweitzer is again not without vows. A lady-patron sought a commitment from him not to go barehead in tropics after sunset. "So for her sake, I now renounce the pleasure of letting the evening breeze play upon my head after a hot day on the Equator. The keeping of my promise, however, has agreed with me."

And here is a another that he relates when interned during the 2nd World War : "My wife and I, heavily laden with baggage, could hardly get along, over the shingle between the lines. Thereupon, a poor cripple whom I had treated in my camp came forward to help us. He had no baggage, because he possessed nothing, and I was much moved with his offer, which I accepted. While we walked along side by side in the scorching sun, I vowed to myself that in memory of him, I would in future always keep a lookout at stations for heavily laden people and help them. And this vow I have kept (even in his eighties). On one occasion, however, my offer made me suspected of thievish intentions!"

Travelling Third Calss : Survey by Rail

The two travel a lot by rail, third class. Here Gandhi has a rawer deal when he initially travels unknown in India. His autobiography has a full chapter on the "woes of third class passengers on India's railways."

Once, when asked why he always travelled third-class, Schweitzer replied drily, "Because there is no fourth".

Begging with Tact & Restraint

In their lifework, both have to rely a good deal on public contributions. A 'begging' method or style gets evolved. "... begging with tact and restraint is better appreciated than any sort of stand-and-deliver approach, and also that the correct method of begging includes the good–tempered acceptance of a refusal," counsels Schweitzer.

Gandhi should approve of it. "It was indeed hard to prosecute a long protracted struggle without funds. I did not realise then as I do now that... God never gives a *Satyagrahi*... anything beyond his strictest needs."

Schweitzer would endorse that. When an American millionaire offered to relieve him of all financial anxiety, Schweitzer thankfully declined; "with such assistance the work of the Hospital would lose its deepest meaning."

Dictum of Self-help

Both insist on self-help from the inmates of their *ashrams* or hospitals. They indicate their diapproval of "something for nothing." Rules of conduct or commandments are laid down and enforced fairly rigorously, though leavened with love. 'Unworldly' some called them, but the two are fully alive to the value of money and are rather ruthless in cutting down inessential expenditure. Again, accounts are maintained with a care and accuracy bordering on religious duty.

THEIR FINAL TEST

"(It is) ... on the question of Hindu-Muslim unity that my *Ahimsa* would be put to its severest test," says Gandhi. The test was the severest; it finally took a toll of his life.

"As one who had been working for years to bring understanding between Germany and France", the 1914 War Declaration came to Schweitzer with a shock of personal sorrow. And then there was the Second, in 1939. To this sensitive man from Alsace, a French-German province, the two wars were most painful.

Gandhi and Schweitzer; there is an uncommon likeness between the two. They are kindred spirits in more ways than one.

A top-rank civil servant (since retired) and a great lover of books, Mohinder Singh has recently concentrated on the critical and comparative study of many autobiographies. [We have had the privilege of publishing some of his reviews in various issues of IBC – Editor]

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DISCOVERING LOCAL ROOTS OF MODERNISM

Sukrita Paul Kumar, CONVERSATIONS ON MODERNISM, *Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, Shimla, in association with Allied Publishers, New Delhi, 1990, pp.157, Rs.120.* *'Rs. 120.*

Comment by Jasbir Jain

This collection of interviews by: Sukrita Paul Kumar with a number of creative writers and critics, conducted with the specific aim of defining indigenous roots of modernism is, indeed, a very welcome addition to critical work. Kumar, herself a creative writer, has prefaced her collection with a poem which emphasizes the contextual as well as the permanent features of creativity.

The writers she has selected represent a fairly representative range of contemporary names from Urdu and Hindi fiction: Wazir Agha, Nirmal Verma, Qurratulain Hyder, Jeelani Bano, Joginder Paul. There are others like Margaret Chatterjee, Ramesh Chander Shah, M.M. Agarwal, who represent other facets of the literary scene. There are eleven interviews in all, including one with Kathleen Raine to provide just the right degree of objectivity where the subcontinent is concerned.

Interviews serve a purpose specially when the interviewer is very much at home with the subject and is familiar with the literary scene. Sukrita Kumar has obviously done her homework, and her selection of the creative writers is weighed by her preference for their work. One can imagine them sitting and discussing the common ground – the written texts – with a high degree of relatedness. Interviews – which she refers to as 'oral discourse' – have other dimensions than the written word. They are spontaneous, unrevised expressions of the deeply embedded opinions in the writer's psyche – and often open doors which otherwise may have remained closed. In this case what is valuable is the approach not only to modernism but to the creative process: ideas, reality, language, social issues – each one of them is a part of the creative process, and the writer's mind brings it all together.

Wazir Agha & Qurratulain Hyder on Modernism

From among the interviews in terms of the chosen and the stated aim of the author/interviewer, the interviews with Wazir Agha and Qurratulain Hyder are the most specific. Agha draws attention to the fact that modernist writing provided a critique not only of society but also the creative process and the critical apprach. The lack of a strong critical tradition in the subcontinent is itself a limitation to theoretical approaches. Hyder's responses to Kumar's queries are deeply rooted in her own creative experience and relate to her own novels and short stories. Modernism in the Indian context, coming as it did in the fifties and sixties, has necessarily to examine the Western influences.

Role of Critical Traditions

Over and over again, there are references – both by the interviewer and the ones being interviewed – to Western critical perspectives, stances and theories, and to the lack of an indigenous critical tradition. These are two problems which confront most intellectuals and call for some considered thought. We cannot perhaps do much about the Western influences except sift them and confront their reality, but a great deal can be done about developing critical strength and standards. The direction which criticism is likely to take is indicated in some measure in the interviews with Ramesh Chander Shah, M.M. Agarwal and Margaret Chatterjee. These indicate the need to transcend the Western influences and through self-definition and analysis move on to formative frameworks.

Muslim & Hindu Ethos & Other Dimensions

By focusing on different aspects of modernism in the different interviews, Kumar has fairly successfully diversified the discussions and minimised travelling over the same area. Art is an encounter with reality, and modernism is the expression of the individual responses to the outer reality, the ground which needs to be negotiated afresh. The means of negotiation are constitued by art, by language, by a new particularized relationship. Indigenous elements as such will have their roots in religious, social and political conditions. Wazir Agha, Hyder and Bano discuss this with reference to the Muslim ethos, while Nirmal Verma and Shah relate it to the Hindu ethos. M.M. Agarwal discusses the challenges arising out of the new scientific and technological advances, while Margaret Chatterjee provides a philosphical dimension.

Opening Out New Areas of Study

The introduction by the interviewer spells out the parameters, attempts a definition of the modern and modernism, sums up the major responses of those interviewed and places them in the cultural context. One is left wishing, however, for more specific answers: an evaluative view of the interviews by the author herself which is not forthcoming.

This is not to undermine their value: the aim with which the interviews have been conducted is laudable, the idea exciting, and the literary territory valuable part of our cultural and social situation, the intellectual relationship is a valid one. The interviews open out new areas of thought and are valuable both to the critic and the lay person. They are of value to the English language reader, as well as to the reader and researcher of other Indian literatures. In fact the dialogues truly extend to becoming conversations: they provoke the reader to respond and at one level, there are three participants in every interview – the reader joins in. And at yet another level, those who are being interviewed interact and interrelate to each other in the larger critical milieu.

As Sukrita Paul Kumar's training is in western literatures, the examples she chooses and the framework she adopts is rooted in them. But her insight goes beyond the western, a healthy indication where criticism in India is concerned. The volume is obviously a crytallization – and a constructive one at that – of the discontentment many of us feel within the confines of the western viewpoint. It is a very welcome step in the right direction, and invaluable to researchers and theoreticians.

Dr. Jasbir Jain, a senior faculty member in the Deptt. of English, University of Rajasthan, is now also Principal of the Rajasthan College.

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THE "DUARI" MORASS

S.Om Prakash \DEVELOPMENT OF THE WEAKER SECTIONS: Problems, Policies and Issues
Uppal Publishing House, New Delhi, 1990.

Comment by Ashok Mahajan

(Excerpt of Broadcast delivered by the author on 10th Jan. 91 at 9.30 p.m. on the National Channel of All India Radio, New Delhi, in their programme, 'Taking About Books'.)

Dr. S.Om Prakash, an Asstt. Prof. of Psychology in the Deptt. of Humanities, IIT Kanpur, has earlier worked as a social scientist in the Comprehensive Rural Health Services Centre, Ballabgarh of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, Delhi. His books include *Caste Hindu and Scheduled Caste Children in Rural India, Caste and Politics in Indian Education, and Banduwa Majdoor Larki Ki Kahani* ('Tale of a Bonded Girl').

A VILLAGE STUDY OF POVERTY

This book is a field-based study of the village Duari and its three Purvas located in Kanpur district. The author maintains that a rising growth rate has been no guarantee against poverty and development of Scheduled Castes and Tribes. The Government launched three programmes for alleviation of poverty, namely IRDP (Integrated Rural Development Programme), NREP (National Rural Employment Programme), and RLEGP (Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme). But they have somehow benefited the select households of rural upper castes alone. The caste system in Uttar Pradesh, like in other states of north India, has a hierarchical structure. On the top are Brahmins and Thakurs who constitute 17% of the total population. Intermediate castes such as Yadavs, Kurmis, Lodhs, Gujars and Koris constitute 42%; the minority community, 15%; the remaining 26% are made up of the scheduled castes, principal among them being Chamars and Pasis. The same ratio of population prevails in Duari and its three Purvas or hamlets, namely, Maan Singh ka Purva, Manhapur, and Narainpur.

Land Ownership & Occupational Profile

The author contends that 80% of the agricultural land available in Duari is directly or indirectly owned by the Thakurs and Brahmins. There is a large number of female workers, all of whom belong to the scheduled castes. The women of the upper castes do not occupy themselves with outdoor work.

There are about 50 shops. The shop-owners generally belong to the intermediate trader castes. Some of them dole out items of grocery and foodstuffs on credit to the local chamars and pasis, and consequently have become their life-long creditors.

The author has made an in-depth study of 52 bonded labourers who were interviewed at length by him. Some of them were married but their women did not belong to them. Instances of atrocities on the weaker sections have been recorded on yearly basis.

Professional Castes & Jajmani System

The village has a total population of 2500, out of which 320 are upper castes, all of them rich landowners and village administratiors. Kayasths have taken up jobs in the local post office and village school. The Telis are oil pressers and oil sellers. The Nais and the Koris are traditional barbers and weavers. Pasis are toddy tappers and match-men. The Chamars are engaged in leather work. The Doms act as scavengers and drum beaters. Their females are the local midwives known as Dais. It may be interesting to note that no caste group which traditionally performed important functions in the village economy has completely ceased to do so. In fact the 'Jajmani system' is still very much extant.

PROBLEMS

The author has highlighted the following problems in vivid detail: Caste oppression, high indebtedness and usury, extortion and exploitation. The police and the administrative machinery are in league with the feudal system which runs and controls the village. Other ills that plague the rural population such as illiteracy, extravagant expenditure on outdated ceremonies and customs, overpopulation and failure of family planning programmes, lack of hygiene and prevalence of disease, shortage of clean drinking water and unemployment are dealt with in a systematic manner.

Dr. Om Prakash, on the methodological plane, adopts a binary matrix for determining policy strategies against stated problem dimensions.

The Doctrine Of Karma

The author also ascribes the doctrine of *Karma* as one of the factors responsible for the passivity and resignation of the backward classes to their lot. The *Karma* system, according to Judith Willer, works without the intervention of a power-concept. God has no role in this deterministic system. Therefore, there is no problem of theodicy, because there is no need of the Omnipotent. The system derives its strength from a community belief imposed upon the common man and rigorously practised upon the backward castes.

A Vicious Circle

It transpires from the findings that existing social institutions and administrative agencies are neutralizing the efficacy of most policies and programmes aimed at elimination of the plight and problems of the weaker sections of our society. Each of the governmental programmes the study examined seems to have a chain effect on other links of the vicious circle in which the masses of backward castes are entrapped and enmeshed.

The analysis suggests that, in order to appreciate the intensity of the problem and the specificity of the type of assistance needed by the weaker sections, more micro-level studies of such types should be conducted. This will aid in proper monitoring and implementation of programmes and strategies for the upliftment of the underprivileged.

Mr.Ashok Mahajan, a well-known poet and critic, has often broadcast his poems and book reviews from the New Delhi Station of Akash Vani.

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Towards A Public Library System in the XXI Century

A Plea by Mohamed Taher

"The reading of all good books is indeed like a conversation with the noblest men of past centuries who were the authors of them, nay a carefully studied conversation, in which they reveal to us none but the best of their thoughts", so said Descartes. That is, books are not dead things which may be discarded. Rather, they contain a potency of life in them. Milton goes even to the extent of saying, "books are as lively and as vigorously productive as those fabulous dragon's teeth; and being sown up and down, may chance to spring up armed men."

'Books', as a term here, includes all printed and non-printed reading and learning materials. A library, in the modern sense, does not only store books. It has a variety of resources to teach, educate, inform and communicate ideas to meet the changing needs of a society. While it performs these functions, with or without being noticed, the society does benefit.

Books On The Shelf — For Use & Study

Further, a library today does not only store the materials; it acquires these with only one purpose, and that is for 'use'. Books were acquired even in the past, but the purpose was to fulfill the custom and have a pride in storing rare books. The scribes copied each book with all the pain, and effort, and produced very few copies. The scenario has been revolutionised by printing and other technologies. Books now form a part of a common man's shelf, not for pride, but for reference and study. The cost factor, however, hinders buying of all books indeed by an individual. Hence the need for centres of reading materials, librarians and reading rooms. Libraries provide maximum number of reading materials which serve a maximum number of users. The motto of libraries today is "Educate the Users", as well as "Serve the Users" to 'maximise the use of graphic records' with minimum of cost, time and effort.

The question arises: are there enough resources — men, money and material — to serve or educate the 'users'? Moreover, are the 'users' (for whom the materials are intended), conscious of the changing information needs? Are the resources fully utilised?

Volumes would be required to give an answer to these questions, substantiating the same with facts and figures. In brief, one can make an indepth study of the existing users, resources and correlate these findings to users' demands — current and future.

Free & Open Public Libraries

For instance, one can find an answer in a public library in an Indian city. While libraries did exist in India since ages past, the sense of free and open public libraries is a twentieth century phenomenon. A clear picture of the supply or demand phenomenon is still emerging. Only nine States in the country have enacted the Public Library Bill; others have yet to streamline their set-up. The States which have a legislation are Tamil Nadu (1948, called as the Madras Library Act), Andhra Pradesh (1960), Karnataka (1965), Maharashtra (1967), West Bengal (1979), Kerala (1989), Manipur (1989), Haryana (1989), and U.P. (1989). *[We may note the timelag and the over-altgaps in legislation. Eds]*

Andhra Pradesh has a leading place among the States which have made history in the spheres of library movement and library legislation. The scene here is exemplary in certain areas, like in the network of branch libraries, mobile library system, etc. But the State requires priority of attention in areas like the status and fuctions of the State Central Library (formerly Asafiya Library). This library was to act as an apex and guiding body for all the subordinate libraries in the State and link up its services with other State libraries. Incidentally, the original founders of the Library, in 1891, too had such ambitious plans.

FREEDOM OF AND ACCESS TO INFORMATION

The users of these public libraries are increasing. A glance at the statistics of materials consulted *vis-a-vis* materials borrowed, as well as the visitors in these libraries, will give some interesting results. Most of these visitors (users) are found to consult "light" reading materials, like newspapers, weeklies, fiction books, etc. This lopsided use of library materials, otherwise overflowing with enormous amount of reading materials, is alarming. It simply indicates a "lack of marketing" by the libraries and librarians concerned. Marketing here refers to use of publicity and propaganda aids which can convert many a "non-information" users to information users, many a non-serious readers to serious readers, and many a serious readers to a thinking lot.

Our contemporary society requires free flow of information with no censorship of any kind. Censorship on material which is indecent and destructive is not questioned here. But otherwise the people of any country or government should have a freedom of information and freedom to access and use of any information that may be common and sensible to all types of constructive approach, the flow can only stop if the information is against natural laws - *i.e.* if it is destructive and unhealthy in a general sense. Any society which needs to grow, (there can be hardly any which would think otherwise,) must have a library system — well-financed by the government/management, well-housed (with a balanced collection based on the needs of the users), well- marketed, and well-used.

The Challenges of Emerging Information Culture

Society needs information for a variety of purposes. Any information source, like a directory, a desk-book, an encyclopaedia, a manual, etc. needs to be acquired and stored systematically. We may quote Oliver Wendell Holmes, a poet of repute, "Every library should try to be complete on something, if it were only the history of pinheads." It means, different libraries situated in a locality should cooperate with each other. Each can specialise in one field, rather than try to collect everything and be yet incomplete. This will lead to sharing of resources and avoiding the wastage of men, money and materials. The question one can pose for the professionals of library science is: how far are they really practising this economy measure?

The following aspects need due consideration, in the context of emerging information culture (more so in India), right from the strategies to the point of user satisfaction: the nature of culture, clash of cultures, communication level, censorship, behaviour of the people towards libraries

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(which includes the total absence of even mention of library/learning centres in the election manifestos), trends in book trade, impact of technology on society, information retrieval processes, philosophy (service-orientedness) of the profession of librarianship, etc.

As Daniel Bell feels, "No large-scale society changes with the flick of a wrist or the twist of a rhetorical phrase." The post-modern society, or Bell's post-industrial society, has opened many new areas for the modern library to enter, and prove to the people at large that survival without information systems or libraries is a myth. The libraries need to meet the changing needs of the society, and vigorously demonstrate the role they can play in enriching the minds of the people.

Technologies & Techniques

In the West, where the scene of the emerging information society is clearly visible, one can see the impact of various technologies on recording and dissemination of information. By implication, there are other aspects too involved, which the East has to consider, like the opportunities which new technologies open up, the constraints which they impose, and more vitally, the way the society adapts itself to the means of communication that will be added upon. An understanding of the socio-history of information in society is also as important to the information personnel as is a practical understanding of their job. Are the schools of Library and Information Science in the East, ready to undertake these challenges?

The libararian can cooperate with all other groups (working for the progress of the concerned community) to supplement and complement their activities. For instance, if an agricultural extension worker shows a film, he should leave with the librarian simple leaflets containing all the details which would be difficult to remember from one demonstration. The leaflets can be used as teaching materials in adult education classes on the interpretation of written instructions as an aspect of functional literacy. Meanwhile, the librarian would have these and other materials to help answer oral queries. He should also have participated in the original demonstration, to enable him to share a common frame of reference with the community he serves. From this and from the questions he receives, he will be in a position to supply feedback to other agencies on the success of their information efforts so far, and other topics of interest to community he serves. This is only one instance given by a Nigerian case worker.

The professionals can evolve many such areas of information networks to see that the public library of the twenty-first century does more than doling out books and serving newspapers to its users. The leaders of masses and classes too can give a thought to prioritise information in all aspects, for the needs of an emerging society, which requires information more than guns and weapons.

The role of the book collector (librarian) in the face of the improved technologies and the information explosion deserves clarification. The role does not change, that is a fact. The librarian will continue to work with the 'paper society' to organise scholarship and information.

Dr. Mohamed Taher is Deputy Librarian, American Research Centre, Hyderabad

A BIBLIOGRAPHY ON CHILD EDUCATION

S.P. Agrawal and Naresh Kanta : CHILD EDUCATION IN INDIA : Index to Scholarly Writings in Indian Educatioal Journals and Newspapers since Independence ..... *Concept Publishing Co. New Delhi (1990) 115 p,*

Comment by M.P. Satija

This book was been compiled on behalf of the Indian Council of Child Education (ICCE) mainly for the participants of the National Conference on Child Education held in Delhi on January, 2-3, 1990. In the International Year of the Female Child, its utility and relevance would be unquestioned.

Child welfare and development, and other related issueds are of utmost concern in every civilised society. At the international and national levels, many agencies have come up to plan, assist, monitor, and aid projects for cild welfare, and for the protection of their rights. Even the idea of a Children University has been mooted *(pp. 90-102)*.

This select bibliography has about 650 entries for the period 1950 to 1988, from 58 journals and newspapers *(listed on pages 13-14)*. It also includes a few references on books, project reports, and Ph.D. theses on the subject – all listed in one sequence. @PARA = In two parts this book is preceded by prefatory material explaining its purpose, scope and structure. First part is of two sections : The first section entitled "Basic Bibliography" lists all entries by author, or by title in case no author is there. Every entry provides full bibliographic details sans abstracts. The other section "Subject Index" re-arranges all the above entries under the subject headings, *viz, Bal Bhavan,* Basic Education, Child Education, Elementary Education, K.G. Education, Montessory Education, Nursery Education, The headings Primary Education. Child Education, Basic Education contain the largest number of entries in that order respectively.

There are no independent headings for Rural Education, Female Child Education. Obviously, the bibliography is not exhaustive. Besides, only Indian sources have been scanned, though it needlessly lists some literature pertaining to foreign countries. Whatever be, this list holds a mirror to the volume of thoughts or ideas we have directed towards child education in India. Perhaps 650 entries over 40 years from about 57 sources is not adequate.

Second part of the book contains two re-printed essays : 1. *Idea of Children's University* by the Secretary of ICCE, and 2. A *Plea for Research in Reading in India* by S.P. Agrawal. Another small chapter, rather an appendix, "*Child in the Constitution*" names various articles in the Indian and some other Constitutions ensuring rights and special privileges of the children.

The book closes with a rather a meagre list of 79 Experts in Children Education and Welfare, mostly from the educational institutions. Despite its limitations, this could be a valuable guide for educationists, researchers, and agencies engaged in children research and welfare.

Sh. M.P. Satija teachers Library Science in the Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar.

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COMMUNICATION ARTS

Why Do I Make Documentary Films?

by Homi Sethna

Because I believe in LIFE—Life with a Capital "L": To me, Life as it is, life in the raw, life as it is lived by millions of different human beings in different parts of the World, is the most important thing; and to be able to portray any part of it, honestly and authentically, in all its variations and dimensions fascinates me...

The key words are Reality and Realism... To 'see', study, observe and portray Reality as it exists with Realism, without exaggerated statements, without hiding facts, without mouthing propagandist jargon, without excuses or apologies for not presenting Truth, and finally, without any lies or untruth creeping into the fabric of the film.

Most young students in high school or college like to read novels, thrillers, or murder mysterises or detective stories, which are all fiction. And this taste for fiction continues in later life for all those who can spare the time to read books even when they become working people.

Strangely enough, reading of fiction never ever interested me. My main interest was indulging in activities which gave me real 'experience' of life and living. Book reading and particularly fiction reading did not interest me because 'live' living experience of day-to-day working with people gave me new insights into the meaning of life; and the dark and dismal and the unseemly or cruel or even tragic side of life did not deter me from pursuing my quest for experience, for that was Real; and Reality leads me on, now today, as in the past, in the search for Truth! For, to me Truth is not just STRANGER than fiction, as the saying goes, but it is STRONGER than fiction.

...And that is the reason why I make Documentary Films; and I hope that I shall always continue to do so.

ABOUT REAL THINGS & PEOPLE

In the words of Paul Rotha, one of the doyens of the Documentary Movement in England... "real and creative thought must be about real things... Let the Cinema attempt the dramatization of the living scene and the living theme springing from the living present, instead of from the synthetic fabrication of the Studio. Let the Cinema attempt film interpretation of modern problems and events of things as they really are today and by so doing perform a definite function. Let the Cinema recognise the existence of real men and women, real things and real issues, and by doing, so, offer to the State and to Industry, to public and private organisations of all kinds, a method of communication and propoganda to project not just personal opinions but arguments for a World of Common Interests".

Robert Flaherty, who made "Nanook of the North" was... "an explorer among simple human beings, a kind of poetic anthropologist, a man whose very nature required him to make films by living happily among people whose lives are governed by the basic traditions of an isolated existence in natural surroundings of ice, sea, rock or swamp..."

A Stark Reportage

When in 1935, Arthur Elton and Edgar Anstey made a documentary film, it was considered a stark piece of reportage. Entitled "Housing Problems", it put life in the raw on to the screen with a simplicity which had never been achieved before... The makers of the film went into a slum house and talked to the occupants who were plagued with rats. They photographed exactly what they saw and they recorded the exact speech of the people talking about their housing conditions. It was the simplest and most direct of films, and it moved spectators deeply. Its given authenticity shocked them. It brought them, perhaps for the first time in the cinema, face to face with unpleasant facts. The term 'realist' entered the documentary vocabulary. Here were real people sitting in their own slum-house and speaking to the audience, in their own unaltered character.

A GREAT TRADITION

All these facts about the tradition of great documentaries have inspired me greatly, particularly because I worked in England as a student-apprentice in British studios for over four and half years, soon after the war, ending my training period in the Crown Film Unit Studios when John Grierson was the Chief, and I came in direct contact with these great documentaries. Added to this exposure to the great Documentary Movement, my personal innate inclination to discover and portray Reality with Realism has made me a documentary film-maker, rather than a feature films man.

INDIAN DOCUMENTARY — Problems & Potential

Turning now from the title question of this article to the Indian Documentary in general and its development in the 80's in particular, I feel that the biggest difficulty that the documentary film has faced in most parts of the world, and particularly so in India, has been the question of exhibition and sponsorship. Unless a documentary film has an outlet and is seen by the people for whom it is meant, it has no value lying unexhibited in cans! And who would sponsor a documentary which cannot be seen by the target audience ? So, in India, the rule of compulsory exhibition of documentaries, or newsreels (Film Advisory Board 'approved films') in all cinemas all over India was brought in. Therefore, the Government became the largest maker and sponsor of documentary films... This compulsory exhibition rule was brought in by the British during the last World War, because they wanted propaganda and information films about the war and the war effort and allied subjects to be seen by the Indian public. The rule still continues and the Government still remains the largest and the only distributor of documentary films to cinemas all over India.

To assess the Indian documentary over the last nearly 50 years, when Information Films of India was set up by the British Government in the early 40's, is practically impossible, unless one makes just broad generalisations, and then we pick up a few outstanding films. The general opinion about the government sponsored film has been that, being

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a vehicle for government propaganda – or even so-called information – has been rather dull and boring. But there have been some masterpieces during all these years, which have not only won prestigious international awards, but have also been highly acclaimed by critics and connoisseurs abroad.

INDEPENDENT PRODUCERS & T.V.,PROSPECTS & FESTIVALS

The "independent" documentary film-maker who wanted to make a film and express himself or 'expose' a situtation, was totally inhibited by the unfortunate condition of the absence of exhibition facilities. But the opening of television gave faint hopes. Although some of our best National Award winning films made by independent producers and directors in the 1980's have not been shown on Doordarshan; but have been screened at the Oberhausen and other foreign Festivals and some may have even been telecast abroad, the ball has started rolling in the 80's; and there is no doubt that these independent films, most of them made by young film-makers, have raised not only the standard of the Indian documentaries but also the hope in the hearts of all indenpendent film-makers to make really worthwhile documentaries on their own.

Add to this, the 'Festival Films' sponsored by the Government and channelled through the Films Division. Many of these longer films sent for the Indian Festivals in U.K., U.S.A., U.S.S.R. and France etc. have been extremely good and have certainly raised the standard and the image of the government-sponsored films...

So, there is no doubt that the Indian documentary in the 80's has taken a big leap forward and we who have been privileged to view them in the Spectrum screenings (meant to be the best of the Documentaries of the last 10 years from 1980 to 1989) have been quite happy to see the progress, although we must confess that we had to reject quite a few as not being suitable.

My own contribution during the 80's has been rather on a low-key as compared to the 50's, 60's and 70's, when I was much more active. But let me confess that I have never been enamoured by any of the films made by our team, because none of them has touched the core of my 'being,' my 'inside' which is stirred by the portrayal of stark reality depicted with realism. Whether it is 'The Indian Story' showing the Bhagalpur blindings or "Our City - Hamara Shehar", about the hutment dwellers, the slums of Bombay; or "Bhopal – Beyond Genocide", or the "Voices from Baliappal" or "Bai" or the earlier Films Division Films "Encounter with Faces" or "Mera Naam Chamar" – They call me Chamar – all these are great documentaries, depicting life in the raw with realism, authentic, moving, human documents...

THE PURSUIT OF REALITY

And so to end this article, I would like to quote from *Marie Seton's* 1960 piece on "The Pursuit for Reality": The Development of Documentary Films"... "Above everything else, the Documentary Film can capture the spirit of the present time, the essence of a place, and the nature of work in progress and the character of the people who keep the world going by their work... The Documentary was conceived as a dynamic means of picturing reality, and leading audiences to know the World they live in. It was that branch of cinema which came into being as an expression of idealism and social conscience. The Documentary Film was born of the general idea that it would be good for all to strive for a better world and harness the dyamic possibilities of the film medium in the service of humanity... The best documentaries have served this end, for they have all projected respect for ordinary people and their work..."

With these great words, may I end this note with the hope that the people who read this will also have tolerance and understanding for all the common people of this world, without whom no real documentary could be made.

Homi Sethna is a well-known maker of documentary films, who has raised his voice at varions forums on behalf of his fraternity of documentary-makers.

Tapti Datta

MICROCOMPUTERS IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

Published jointly by the Indian Assoication of Educational Technology, New Delhi and The Academic Press, Gurgaon, Haryana (1986) Price : Rs. 80./-

Reviewed by Rita Nayyar

Ms. Datta has written an extremely informative book about the use of computers in special education, but it doesn't seem to be relevant to the Indian milieu.

The book is divided into four separate sections, three of which have been handled beautifully. The fourth talks more about the introduction of computer science in the CBSE syllabus than the use of computers in special education. The first section, a sort of introduction prepares the reader for what follows.

The second section gives an excellent overview of the 'Microcomputer and its Educational Implication'. The general introduction to the computer is very lucid and would be very clear even to the layman not familiar with computers. The author very clearly explains the questions to keep in mind while buying a computer and the relevant software.

The third section introduces the novice to the concept of Special Education, explains clearly the various levels of learning difficulty and how these can be overcome with the aid of the computer. Again, a person not familiar with computers gets a very clear insight into the various things that can be done with computers and gets a very comprehensive overview of the software available. The use of the machine with blind, deaf and orthopaedicaly handicapped children has been handled very well.

The author talks about the CLASS project which is not really a program for special education, but provides a very small number of computers to certain schools to introduce the normal children to computers. The reader is left wondering as to what the situation in India is, and if anything is being done to be able to use the computer in special education in the country. There are no suggestions either on how the ideas given in the book can be implemented.

Nevertheless the book makes excellent reading for anyone interested in introducing computers as an aid to special education in their institution.

Mrs. Rita Nayyar teachers Computer Science in the SMS Vidyalay, Jaipur.

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NUCLEAR POWER AND YOU — IX

THE ECONOMICS OF NUCLEAR POWER.

The power industry is a highly capital intensive one requiring huge investments to construct and commission (fixed capital cost) and to operate and maintain (variable operation & maintenance and fuelling costs) power stations. Capital costs, including interest during construction (IDC), are incurred in the initial six to eight years while variable costs are incurred from in-service date, for about 30 to 40 years till the plant is decommissioned. The Unit Energy Cost (UEC) of generation at any power station is calculated, based on annual cost, comprising of capital cost component (i.e. interest of capital and depreciation for an economic plant life of 25 years), O&M and fuelling charges and dividing these by the electrical energy generated during the year. This does not include transmission and distribution costs. The capital cost forms about 75% of the UEC (cost/KWh) and gets adversely affected by time over-runs of construction period and resultant cost over-runs due to escalation in material and labour costs as well as the added interest on capital during construction. Similar investments and costs are involved in case of the other two commercially viable sources i.e. hydro and coal from which electricity is generated.

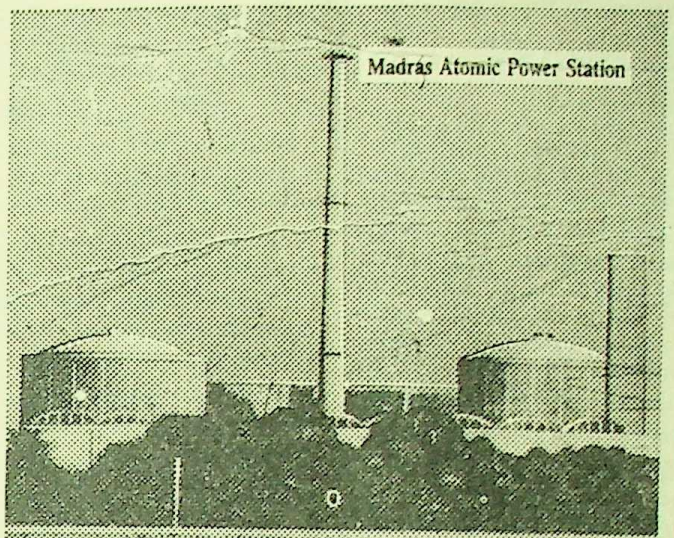
Global economic viability of nuclear power.

Worldwide experience of operating coal and nuclear power plants indicates, that nuclear power at locations distant from coal fields, scores over coal thermal power in most countries. The ratio of coal UEC to nuclear UEC ranges between one and two. This is because the higher initial capital cost of the nuclear power plants is offset by their lower fuelling costs during the plant life, resulting in lower UEC of generation. For example, the ratio of coal and nuclear electricity generation costs in Germany is 2.02, in France 1.80, in U.K. 1.40 and in Japan 1.37.

Economic performance and prospects of Indian nuclear power plants.

The *capital cost* in terms of constant money (1987) in Rupees per Kilo-Watt-hour has gradually reduced from Rs.10012 for RAPS-1 to Rs.5747 for MAPS-2. It increased to Rs.8083 at NAPP due to marked changes in design. The average arrived at for earlier stations is Rs.7093. For new stations under construction, it is Rs.11301 for KAPP-1&2, Rs.9048 for RAPP-3&4 and Rs.11545 for TAPP-3&4 (cost escalation at 7% per year). The 1989 average capital cost in Rupees per Mega Watt is about 2 crores for hydro, 1.5 crores for thermal and 2 crores for nuclear.

The *Unit Energy Cost (UEC)* of generation includes interest during construction, depreciation based on 25-year plant life, 12% returns on capital, O&M expenditure, fuelling costs and levies towards heavy water lease and make-up and decommissioning. The cost of waste management at the plant site is included in the capital and O&M costs. However, the costs of reprocessing and high level waste disposal are not included, as it is estimated that plutonium credit from the reprocessed spent fuel will more than offset these costs.


Madras Atomic Power Station

The immediate imperatives to improving the economics of nuclear power are reduction of project construction periods from 9-14 years to 6-8 years; raising power station capacity factors to 70-75% and reducing heavy water losses. Shorter construction periods are already being achieved, by standardising the nuclear power plant design from Narora onwards to all subsequent projects; by procuring in advance, long delivery key equipment like calandria and end-shields and by using high capacity cranes for erection of equipment from Kakrapar onwards. Towards improving capacity factors and reducing heavy water losses, efforts are continuously being made through detailed system studies and through remedial action. Economically, nuclear power is seen to be viable and quite comparable to power from coal, specially at locations about 800 km away from coal fields.

TYPICAL UNIT ENERGY COSTS (UEC) OF GENERATION FOR SOME OPERATING POWER STATIONS
(Paise/KWh)-1989

Nuclear		Coal		Hydro	
TAPS	43.47	Korba (Pit-head)	40.52	Bairasiul	32.94
		Wanakbori	63.66		
RAPS	44.48	Singrauli (Pit-head)	40.46	Loktak	54.27
		Kota (1986-87)	76.05		
MAPS	50.82	Neyveli (Pit-head)	53.00.	Salal-1	48.76
		Tuticorin	61.55		

The UECs for different energy sources indicated above are for perspective only. Not to prove economic superiority of any one source over the other. Electricity is an essential input to agriculture, industry, transportation and societal needs. It is more important to generate sufficient electrical energy to achieve and maintain national development and economy. In the ultimate analysis, as Dr. H.J. Bhabha so aptly put it, "No power is costlier than no power."

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HOW "GREEN" WAS THE GREEN REVOLUTION ?

YOUNG RESEARCHERS' SECTION
A CASE STUDY OF WHEAT PRODUCTION IN PUNJAB/HARYANA

Invinder Paul Singh and Sunita Verma*

The first stage of a new era in Indian agriculture started in 1960-61 with launching of Intensive Agricultural District Programmes (IADP) in selected districts. The IADP planners propagated the concept of 'package of practices', that is,the use of a complete set of all inter-related inputs and improved practices. While the performance of IADP varied from district to district, the programme clearly demonstrated the gains of the 'package approach'. In 1964-65, a modified version of the same was extended to several other parts of the country in the form of Intensive Agricultural Area Programme (IAAP).

1966 – HYVP

The second stage of growth came into effect with the introduction of High Yielding Variety (seeds) Programme (HYVP) from the *Kharif* season of 1966, in which special attention was focussed on propagating, on a large scale, new high yield varieties (HYV) of food crops in areas having assured irrigation facilities. Besides higher yield, a greater intensity of cropping was also emphasized. Entirely new "crop rotations" were made possible by the development of short-duration varieties of paddy, wheat, maize, jowar and bajra suited to different agro- climatic conditions. The advent of the so-called Green Revolution based on HYV or hybrid seeds led to significant increase in use of agricultural inputs like fertilizers, pesticides, insecticides and irrigation etc. which led to enormous increase in the yields of wheat crop. Increased yields implied that greater benefits should have accrued to the farmers.

Methodology & Data For The Study

In order to analyse how much the farmers have benefitted, the costs and returns were worked out on different cost concepts basis.

For comparison, the data were collected for two periods, i.e. for 1963-64 and 1986-87. The year 1963-64 related to *Pre*-Green Revolution period. A study entitled "*Studies in Economics of Farm Management in Punjab*" was conducted in this year. This report was taken as the basis for comparison. The second period *i.e.* 1986-87 related to a *Post*-Green Revolution year in which the (present) study was carried out. The districts and villages were selected (in the "Farm Management Study") purposively for collection of same set of data in 1986-87. The sample districts were Karnal, Kurukshetra, Jind, Rohtak and Sonepat in Hayrana. In all, 20 villages were selected from these five districts.

A matching sample of farmers was randomly drawn from various size groups established by the *Pre*-Green Revolution Study. i.e. upto 2 hac., 2 to 4 hac, 4 to 6 hac, 6 to 8 hac, 8 to 12 hac, 12 to 20 hac and above 20 hac. In all, 200 cultivators were selected by probability proportion to sample size. In this study, both primary and secondary data were used. Primary data were collected on a specifically structured schedule from 200 selected respondents by personal interview method. Secondary data were collected from the study "Studies in Economics of Farm Management in Punjab (1963-64)."

CULTIVATION COSTS

Farmers' cost of cultivation of wheat were computed on different cost concept basis viz. A^1 A^2 & C. These different cost concepts are as follows:

Cost A^1 : Pertains to paid out costs or expenses incurred in cash and kind on material inputs, hired human labour, bullock and machine labour (both hired and owned), depreciation on owned fixed capital, interest on working capital and land revenue & assets.

Cost A^2 : When rent paid for leased-in land is added to cost A^1, one gets cost A^2.

Cost B : obtained, with addition to cost A^2, of rented value of owned land and interest on owned fixed capital.

Cost C : obtained when we add imputed value of family labour to cost B.

Net returns on different costs basis were obtained by deducting different types of costs from gross returns. The figures of 1986-87 were deflated by the price index and were brought at 1963-64 prices so that the effect of inflation during period of 25 years i.e. between 1963-64 and 1986-87 could be removed in order to have real comparison.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Yields : Average yield of wheat per hectare in the two selected periods is shown in *Table I.* It may be seen that there was an enormous increase in the yield of wheat in 1986-87 compared to 1963-64 yields. During 1986-87, the yield per hectare of wheat on different size holdings varied between 34.75 quintals to 38.12 quintals. The weighted average yield per hectare of all the holdings worked out to 36.5 quintals.

This represented an increase in yield by 192 per cent over 1963-64 yield. The yields per hectare was highest on holding size-group of above 20 hectare and was lowest on holding size group of 0-2 hectare.

The enormous increase in yields in 1986-87 gave the impression that farmers would have benefitted more than what they got in 1963-64. But when costs and returns were worked out on different costs basis, an entirely different picture emerged. It clearly indicated that farmers, in 1986-87 were not better off from what they were, before the advent of Green Revolution.

COSTS & RETURNS

Expenditure per hectare of wheat in two periods is shown in *Table II.* It is clear from the table that it costs Rs. 1290.75 on Cost C basis to raise an acre of wheat in 1986-87 (deflated at 1963-64 prices) which represented an increase of 92.05 percent over 1963-64 figure, whereas Costs A^1, A^2 & B showed an increase of 180.12, 165.10 and 105.85 percent repectively over 1963-64 figures.

The increased expenditure on wheat was mainly because of increased use of inputs in the *post*-Green Revolu-

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TABLE I.

Average Yield Per Hectare of Wheat in 1963-64 and 1986-87.

Holding Size Group (Hectares)	Yield in 1963-64 (qtls) Grain	Bhusa	Yield in 1986-87 (qtls) Grain	Bhusa
0-2	14.12	19.75	34.75	35.87
2-4	11.00	15.75	35.75	38.37
4-6	12.37	17.25	37.50	36.12
6-8	13.25	18.00	36.00	35.00
8-12	12.75	18.00	35.62	33.50
12-20	11.00	13.75	37.62	36.87
20 and above	13.25	16.62	38.12	38.00
Overal averae	12.50	17.00	36.50	36.25
			(192.00)	(113.23)

(* Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage increase in the yield)

TABLE II

Expenditure Per Hectare on Wheat in 1963-64 and 1986-87.

Holding size Group (ha)	Total cost in 1963-64 on the basis of A^1	A^2	B	C
0-2	286.00	286.00	664.87	870.62
2-4	264.25	318.12	507.75	704.87
4-6	257.75	300.00	490.12	682.75
6-8	288.00	314.00	509.00	665.50
8-12	288.12	340.12	522.25	686.50
12-20	313.50	313.50	579.37	693.50
20 and above	215.12	215.12	349.75	400.87
Average	272.37	298.12	517.62	672.12

Holding size group (ha)	Total cost in 1986-87 (at 1963-64 Price) on the basis of A^1	A^2	B	C
0 -2	737.50	799.37	1012.12	1299.25
2 -4	772.00	834.75	1110.75	1408.82
4 -6	745.00	809.75	1078.25	1323.00
6 -8	702.25	702.25	995.62	1204.75
8 -12	806.25	806.25	1113.75	1289.50
12-20	799.25	799.25	1058.50	1246.25
20 and above	780.75	780.75	1089.00	1264.00
average →	763.00	790.37	1065.50	1290.75
	(180.12)	(165.10)	(105.85)	(92.05)

* Figures in parentheses indicate percentage increase in total cost.

(Continued)

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tion period. Gross returns per hectare of wheat are shown in *Table III*. It is clear from the table that gross income per hectare of wheat varied between Rs. 1298.00 and Rs. 1433.62, the average gross income remaining at 1363.70 in 1986-87 (deflated at 1963-64 prices). Whereas in 1963-64, the gross income varied between Rs. 639.87 and Rs. 911.25, the average gross income remaining at Rs 758.50. The gross income in 1986-87 represented an increase of 79.78 percent over 1963-64 figure.

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Profit or loss per hac. of wheat in 1963-64 and 1986-87 is shown in *Table IV*. It is obvious that there was positive net return of Rs. 76.50 per hac. of wheat in entire sample on Cost C basis in 1986-87. But this figures was less than the figure of 1963-64 which was Rs. 86.50. It indicated a decrease in net returns by 11.55 per cent in 1986-87.

However, profits on Cost basis A^1, A^2 and B showed increase in profits merely by 24.25 percent, 25.35 percent and 25.25 percent respectively over 1963-64 figures.

The profits per hac. of wheat ranged from Rs. 23.75 to Rs. 169.62 in different size groups in 1986-87. However, holding size group 2-4 hac., showed a loss of Rs. 46.75 on Cost C basis, whereas in 1963-64, the profits ranged between Rs. 40.62 and Rs. 345.62 with exception of two size groups 2-4 hac. and 12-20 hac., which indicated losses of Rs. 28.50 and Rs. 53.62, respectively.

Major reason for decline in net profits on Cost C basis in 1986-87 (when deflated at 1963-64 prices) was that output prices were not keeping pace with increasing cost of production. In other words, remunerative prices are not being ensured to farmers by the government. This has resulted in decline of net profits.

Thus, it becomes obvious from the above that gains through Green Revolution appear to be fallacious in light of the productions costs and the produce prices as compiled in the present study.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The study has revealed that the cost of production per hectare of wheat is increasing at a faster rate than the increase in output prices. That is why, gross incomes and net incomes of farmers on Cost C basis are very low and even negative in some cases. In light of evidence stated above, the Prices Commission should try to ensure remunerative price for wheat and keep pace with rising costs of production.

S. Invinder Paul Singh is Asstt. Professor in the Punjab Agriculture University, Ludhiana, and Ms. Sunita Verma is Asstt. Professor in the Rajasthan Agricultural University RCA, Compus, Udaipur.

Editor's Note: In spite of limited space and financial constraints, we intend to provide an opening to the younger generation of academics and research scholars, through our recently opened new Sections : *Young Scholars Section & Young Researchers' Section.* Before we proceed further with this innovation, we would appreciate if our readers respond with their suggestions and points of guidance.

TABLE III

Gross Income Per Hectare From Wheat in 1963-64 and 1986-87

Holding size group (ha)	Gross income in 1963-64		
	Grain	*Bhusa*	Total
0-2	707.50	203.75	911.25
2-4	544.75	131.75	676.50
4-6	618.50	154.62	773.12
6-8	651.87	156.00	307.87
8-12	601.25	153.25	754.50
12-20	517.25	122.62	639.87
20 and above	612.75	133.75	746.50
Over all average	607.75	150.75	758.50
Holding size group (ha)	Gross income in 1986-87 (at 1963-64 prices)		
	Grain	*Bhusa*	Total
0 -2	1128.75	169.25	1298.00
2 -4	1186.87	175.00	1361.87
4 -6	1245.00	159.75	1404.75
6 -8	.1169.50	162.12	1331.62
8 -12	1157.25	157.00	1314.25
12-20	1222.25	179.87	1402.15
20 and above	1238.50	195.12	1433.62
Over all average	1192.57	171.12	1363.70
	(96.22)	(13.51)	(79.78)

* Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage increase in gross income

TABLE IV

Profit or Loss Per Hectare From Wheat in 1963-64 and 1986-87.

Holding size Group (ha)	Net Returns in 1963-64 on the basis of			
	A^1	A^2	B	C
0-2	625.25	625.25	246.37	40.62
2-4	412.12	358.25	168.75	28.50
4-6	515.50	473.25	283.00	90.37
6-8	520.00	494.00	298.87	142.50
8-12	472.37	414.37	232.25	68.00
12-20	326.37	326.37	60.50	53.62
20 and above	531.25	531.25	396.75	345.62
Over all average	486.12	460.37	241.00	86.50
Holding size group (ha)	Net Returns in 1986-87 (at 1963-64 prices) on the basis of			
	A^1	A^2	B	C
0 -2	585.50	523.62	310.87	23.75
2 -4	589.87	527.12	251.12	-46.75
4 -6	659.75	895.00	326.50	81.75
6 -8	629.37	629.37	335.25	126.87
8 -12	508.00	508.00	200.50	24.75
12-20	602.87	602.87	343.62	155.87
20 and above	652.87	652.87	344.50	169.62
Over all average	604.00	577.00	301.87	76.50
	(24.25)	(25.35)	(25.25)	(-11.55)

* Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage change in net returns.

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SKETCHES & VIGNETTES OF LIFE

Ashok Mahajan : GOAN VIGNETTES AND OTHER POEMS : *Oxford University Press, (1986) Price : Rs.25; pages 64.*

Reviewed by Tejwant S.Gill

The book under review comprises two parts. In the first part lie scattered sketches of persons in places from north India and in the second, we get compressed *Vignettes* of the Goan life.

Down-To-Earth Rural Portraits

In each sketch in the first part, the poet attempts a spatial juxtaposition of impressions, of which exclusion rather than inclusion of contradictions is the forte. They are of down- to-earth persons excluding picturesque romance and precluding pastoral innocence. Their local features seem etched not in words so much as in brush strokes of a rural portrait-maker or a landscape-painter. Boys flicking swtiches, women in faded saris, asthmatic old men, scats of stray dogs, bands of nomads, bent- backed women and wind-wafted kites are their vivid examples.

That the poet is more a contemporary in orientation than a modern in sensibility becomes evident from the observations which seem to subvert the spatial juxtaposition from without or dissolve it from within: Time hobbles here like a spancelled calf *(Chamoli Village)*
God swell seth Agarwal's belly and his sales— *(Seth Agarwal)*

At night the truck runs More on the hooch in his system Than on the gas in his tank *(Truck Driver)*

Here the poor Yoke the dumb for bread And flog them for a song. *(Tonga Horse)*

He is one more spoke In the felly of his rickshaw wheel. *(Rickshawala)*

All the persons thus etched in these sketches look singular with hardly any experience or relation motivating them to get across their singularity. No intra-personal or inter-personal problems motivate them to open out to each other. Naturally, therefore, the poet has no creative impluse to delineate them in dialogic situations. This looks ironic because with its gelatinous past and volatile present, life in north India tends to provide matter for a dialogic conversion into content.

The Flavour Of Goan Life

This inadequacy is to some extent made up in the *Vignettes* on the Goan life. The Goan characters, Philomena Rebello with her "sartorial passion" exceeding her "pedagogical zeal", the aunt with her "horticultural air" and Joe d' Silva with his loathing for "all kinds of bookish knowledge" seem to have what Shakespeare in another context termed a local habitation and a name. What is notable about them is their fidelity to their grain of which "*Majorda Jaycees Princess*" provides an impressive example. The unanimous choice of Miss Veronica Dias as Princess brings about a complete change in her:

So well schooled in social graces
Sparkles when she smiles
She dances in ten different styles
No other girl bore her grudges.

More than that, this incident raises the expectations of her parents:

Now her Mum and Dad
Are on the lookout
For a rich suitor from the States.

Or if that does n't work out
They will settle for a match
From Arab Emirates.

But a local boy has just no chance
For Miss Veronica Dias
Was crowned Princess at the dance.

Apart from the tipsy flavour of the provinciality of the Goan life, it catches the salty tang of its cosmopolitanism, howsoever paradoxical their combination may look to the ordinary observer. Though not a native of Goa, the poet succeeds well in his effort. Of course, one is inclined to believe that he is helped in this by the fact that the Goan life was neither gelatinous in the past and nor is it volatile in present to the extent of life in north India. All the same, this is a reflection requiring self-reflection from the poet.

Language & Style

The double strain so characteristic of the disposition of the matter and its composition into content is to be found in the language and style of the poet. His impulse is for language and style of the native sort like that of Nissim Eziekel and Mahapatra, for example, who mould the diction of English to the rhythm and flavour of Indian articulation. Deliberately at places he puts words drawn from some dictionary perhaps, which hold no shock-effect however. It is conceived preoccupation of Dharuwalla or Dr. Shiv K.Kumar that seems to lead him astray. Since it is not his impulse to do so, it is hoped that he will deliberately dispense with this artificial, albeit unpoetic, practice.

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POEMS – SPIRITUAL & WORLDLY

Rita Dalmiya : MEERABAI pp. 691 Rs. 80/- & Rs. 60/-
Thrity Bharucha : TO YOU : MY GRACIOUS LORD LORD OF BEING - pp. 50; Rs. 60/-, Rs. 40/-
Kiran Shanker Maitra : NOW pp. 48; Rs. 50/- & 40/-
(Writers' Workshop, Calcutta)

Reviewed by N.P. Sharma

Rita Dalmiya's *Meerabai,* Thrity Bharucha's *To You : My Gracious Lord of Being,* and Kiran Shanker Maitra's. *Now* are three distinctive books published recently (in 1988) by the Writers' Workshop. For the purpose of convenience, one may comment upon Meerabai and Thrity's books of poems together for the simple reason that in these two books, there is something common which one may not find in Maitra's book.

SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCES

Rita's book on *Meerabai,* although written in prose, is pure poetry, and as such can be conveniently bracketed with Thrity's poems. The common thread that runs through these two books is the spiritual element which places them on a high pedestal of creative writing. In fact, poetry, like other things, can be viewed from different angles; but about one thing there can always be a common agreement, namely the edifying quality of poetry.

Meerabai as recreated by Rita belongs to that class of creative literature which is gradually becoming rare. Such works are not the result of an ordinary mood, but are invariably the outcome of a state of mind deeply involved in spiritual search and practice. Rita's identification with the mythical Meerabai is manifest in every line of the book which, as the author hereself says, was written primarily for herself. All good books for that matter are initially written by the authors for their personal contentment; but books thus written some how tend to yield a greater joy to a host of readers who find these books as vivid expression of their own highest thoughts, almost a remembrance. As a matter of fact, it is not the story of Meerabai alone which lends a special charm to this book, but the author's total involvement in the creative process.

The book justifies A.E. Houseman's remark that poetry is not the thing said, but a way of saying it. The real charm lies in the deft handling of the original material by the creative artist. The book touches lofty spiritual heights and for a moment, the reader too identifies himself or herself with the essential spirit of Meerabai embodied so artistically in Rita's book. The book is remarkable for the author's freshness of approach to the subject. It is also noeworthy for its prose style enriched with a high command of the language, coupled with chasteness and felicity of expression. No joy can be a greater joy than the joy of having a spiritual pilgrimage with the saint-poet provided to us by the author poetess. The book should prove to be a landmark for those who care to 'learn and propagate the best that is known and thought in the world'.

TOTAL SURRENDER

Thrity Bharucha's poems are also deeply steeped in spiritual light. The mood of the poetess is expressive of *Ishwarea Pranidthan*, total surrender to God. The poems in the selection, primarily inspired by Tagore's *Gitanjali,* have an identity of their own. The purpose of the 'song celestial' is to let 'men bring meaning to their lives'. It is a very laudable aim so far as a poet's vocation is concerned. Poetry is pleasure combined with instruction. These poems, bathed in spiritual splendour, offer us a lesson for our spiritual growth. No dobut, to err is human, but to be receptive to God's Wisdom is a higher human quality. This receptivity is possible only in a state of total surrender to His infinite Grace and Wisdom. The book carried this message not in direct terms but through the charismatic touch of poetry marked by the poet's sincerity of feeling and the openness of poetic expression. Only those who 'do not look merely with their eyes but see with their soul' can enjoy these poems in their right spirit. One may like to address the poetess in expression of one's gratitude to her:

For these gems that you have strewn
across my path,
For these words ..... to you I do .....
Send my thanks a thousandfold and more . . .

Kiran Shanker Maitra's *Now* belongs to a different class of poetry. His poems are 'poems' in a very restricted sense. It is a highly debatable question whether poetry should deal with purely 'mundane things' or it should transcened the mortal barriers' to have a glimpse of a higher reality of thing's. Plato was perhaps partly right in banishing poets from his ideal Republic for he believed that poetry feeds and waters passions rather than drying them up. The great philosopher sould have certainly liked to have poetry of a noble kind with its edifying quality. Unfortunately, Maitra's poems are deficient in this particular quality of poetry.

At places, undoubtedly he does show his worth as a poet, especially in the use of irony and satire; but the total effect of his poems on a careful reader gifted with a refined poetic taste is generally disappointing. The poet is continually obsessed with 'women in his poem :' a fetish of woman's body. His wishful thinking for 'rendering coitus with the loveliest princess, his preoccupation with woman's bosom, lips, arms, hips, eternal life between the thighs, his diseased psyche entangled into blouse's hook, bra's straps, and the undone knots of a woman's sari ..... all are suggestive of an obsessed mind. This kind of poetry is bound to feed and water the basest human passions 'Maitra's infinite atomic strength of words' seems to have gone waste since it fails to achieve the basic goal of poetry, namely the attunenent and edification of man's mind to the three fundamental attributes of poetry of a higher kind in the region of *Satyam,* the true, *Shivam*, the good, and *Sundarma,* the beautiful.

Dr. N.P. Sharma is P.G. Head, Dept. of P.G. Studies in English, in the L.B.S. College, Jaipur.

Editors Note: *This is a shortened version of Dr. N.P. Sharmas review. Originally, he had quoted various extracts by way of specimen from the three books, but that version was misplaced by our printers.*

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Bharati Mukherjee : Immigrant Lives

Comments by F. A. Inamdar

He has lost his own country and has not acquired any other' ...

Rudyard Kipling, Kim (p. 259)

Bharati Mukherjee's *The Tiger's Daughter* (1973) and *Wife* (1976) deal with two different problems of expatriates. While the first is a truly immigrant novel, the second thematically resembles Arun Joshi's *The Foreigner*. The protagonist, Sindi Oberoi comments upon his mode of life : ' .. I was a foreigner in America. But then, what difference would it have made if I had lived in Kenya or India or any other place for that matter ? My foreignness lay within me and I couldn't leave myself behind wherever I went ' [Arun Joshi, *The Foreigner*, Hind Pocket Books, Delhi, 1968, p. 65.]

Significantly, Dimple' problem does not lie 'out there', but it is within herself, like the problem of Maya in Anita Desai's *Cry, The Peacock* (1963).

THEIR FASCINATING TALES

In a recent interview, Bharati Mukherjee clearly stated her aim in her novels :

"We immigrants have fascinating tales to relate. Many of us have lived in newly independent or emerging countries which are plagued by civil and religious conflicts...When we uproot ourselves from those countries and come here, either by choice or out of necessity, we suddenly must absorb 200 years of American history and learn to adapt to American society .. I attempt to illustrate this in my novels and short stories. My aim is to expose Americans to the energetic voices of new settlers in this country. (*Sunday Review, The Times of India*, October 1, 1989)

Bharati Mukherjee's novels have nothing in common with other immigrant novelists. She does not deal with problems of alcohol abuse of the expatraites—like Kartar Dhillon. There is a marginal thematic resemblance between *Wife* and *Free and Equal* of Lalita Candbhir. The novelists have dramatized the protagonists' search and frustration for employment. Beyond this, there is hardly anything common between them.

My object (in this article) is to show how the immigrants in Bharati Mukherjee's *The Tiger's Daughter* and *Wife* try to adapt to American society and how in consequence, they are portrayed as rootless. In these, the novelist seizes upon the moment as it is lived in all its intensity, confession and desperation by people who have broken away from their cultural and historical roots. (*Times Literary Supplement* July 21-27, 1989).

TARA : WANDERING BETWEEN TWO WORLDS

In *The Tiger's Daughter*, Tara's efforts to adapt to American society are measured by her rejection and revulsion of Indian modes of life. Maya, in Anita Desai's *Cry, The Peacock*, finds mellifluous notes emerging from flora and fauna of Indian life. They are a relish of reality which enchant her senses. For Rudyard Kipling's *Kim*, everything Indian is admirable, almost to the point of worship. The world outside, for Kim, is the reflection of his self. He is a creature of jollity, tenderness and enthusiasm; both devout and sporting, reverent and naughty. But, in *The Tiger's Daughter*, Tara finds in India nothing to her liking. Catelli-Continental Hotel evokes emotion of escape from Calcutta : 'There is, of course, no escape frome Calcutta'. For Tara, Calcutta appears to be Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, with riots in the city, buses burning, and workers surrounding the warehouses. [*The Tiger's Daughter* (London : Chatto and Windus, (1973) Further references are to this edition.—F.A.I.]

ROOTLESS & ALIENATED

Seven years ago, Tara admired 'the houses on Marine Drive'(*18*), but her stay at Vassar has changed her outlook on Indian life. The very houses she admired then, now their shabbiness appalled her'(*18*). Her American attitude to life is readily sensed by relations. They find her 'stubborn' : '. . . the relatives attributed Tara's improprieties to her seven years in America' (*19*).

It is again America's influence on her that makes Bombay's railway station 'more like a hospital' (*19*). While Kipling's Kim finds travelling third-class fascinating and people around him kind and helpful, Tara's supercilious attitude in air-conditioned compartment makes her ironically observe the travelling companions : 'The Marwari . . . a circus animal who has gotten the better of his master', and 'The Nepali was a fidgety older man with coarse hair' . . . 'Both men, Tara decided, could effortlessly ruin her journey to Calcutta' (*20*). For Kim, the roads and railway tracks reveal plentitude of life and are exuberantly human, but Tara finds '. . . dry holes by the sides of railway tracks . . .' (*21*). Tara's rootless self makes the scenery outside, '. . . merely alien and hostile' (*25*).

In Matthew Arnold's words, she finds herself 'wandering between two worlds—one dead, the other powerless to be born, with nowhere to rest my head,' Such dreariness, vacuity and desperation are evoked by her American life :

'New York . . . had been exotic. . . . . there were police-men with dogs prowling the underground tunnels. Because girls like her, ... were being knifed in elevators in their own apartment buildings. The only pollution she had been warned against in Calcutta had been caste pollution. New York was certainly extra-ordinary and it had driven her to despair. (*34*)

Tara is torn between mutually contradictory emotions on seeing aunt Jharna. While, on the one hand, she cannot sympathise with the aunt's religious attempts to heal her child, on the other she thinks : "I

(*overleaf*)

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don't hate you, I love you, and the miserable child, the crooked feet, the smoking incense holder, I love you all" *(38)*.

Similar antithetical feelings beset her in the company of her friends :

'Seven year ago she had played with these friends, done homework with Nilima, brienfly fancied herself in love with Pronob, debated with Reena at the British Council . . . *(43)* But now after her return from America, "She feared their tone, their omissions, their aristocratic oneness". *(43)*

A SPLIT PERSONALITY

Her split personality raises doubts about her husband not understanding her country through her : "....probably he had not understood her either" *(50)*. She is convinced of her "...little death, a hardening of the heart, a cracking of axis and centre"...*(51)*. When she forgets 'the next step of the ritual' in the prayer room,...she even grows nervous with her mother over her mother's "...simple request to share piety with her family", *(54)* and in consequence, she thinks "... in the end she would not stay" *(54)*. We discover autobiographical touches in this incident. Bharati Mukherjee's family was westernized Yet they were rooted to the traditional "*puja-path*". For Tara, it is violence and ghettos in American life that matter, but her friends do not accept the facts about American life. They want to be told about their fantasies of that life. Out of this predicament, her communication becomes devoid of significance. Helplessly she tells Sanjay : "how much easier she thought it was to live in Calcutta ! How much simpler to trust the city's police inspector and play tennis with on Saturdays ! How humane to accompany a friendly editor to watch the riots in town ! New York, she confided, was a gruesome nightmare. It wasn't mugging she feared so much as rude little invasions. The thought of a stranger.. looking into her pocket book, laughing at the notes she had made to herself transformed shoddy, innocuous side streets into giant's fangs crouching...".*(69)*

Similarly, Tara is caught in an anti-thetical tension when she realises that admiration for her does not come from either quarters. While the Indians consider with suspicion, her marriage "an emancipated gesture", *(86)* David does not give her any credit for "cleaning bath-rooms".

VISION-LESS OR VOICE-LESS

According to M. Sivaramakrishna, *The Tiger's Daughter* is "visionless, because it is voiceless". ("*Indian English Novelists* ed. Madhusudan Prasad (New Delhi : Sterling, 1982, p. 73). It is only a half-truth.

Tara's various questions about different modes of life are an attempt to communicate. The novelist's vision of life is one of rootlessness The problem that arises with the critics is, whether that vision has been adequately communicated? If that is so, what does Tara's religious integration towards the close of the novel indicate? Does it show the intensity of the moment lived without any thematic relevance ? If that is so, could it be said that the novel has a flawed structure ? Does the structure fall apart?

Jasbir Jain's division of *The Tiger's Daughter* into four sections, and her observation that "...the third section of the novel is concerned with Tara's early experiences in America, her loneliness, her attempt to stick to Indian ways and the gradual acculturisation leading to her marriage to David Cartwright...." misses the details included in the novel. [Jasbir Jain,"Foreignness of Spirit : The World of Bharati Mukherjee's Novels", The *J & E* Vol. 13, No. 2 (July 1989) p. 15.]

But her observation on *Wife* comes very near my stand that it cannot be treated as a novel on immigration :

"It is difficult to treat the novel as a study of cultural shock for, even while in Calcutta, Dimple is escapist and lost in her private world of fantasy (*Ibid.*,p. 16).

DIMPLE : LOST IN HER PRIVATE WORLD

Dimple's vision of Sita's docility, sacrifice and responsibility is a flag with many messages. She wants to break through the traditional taboos of a wife. She aspires for freedom and love in marriage. This aim brings her indignation, grief, resentment, peevishness, spite and sterile anger. Her psychic defect is implied in her name.

Significantly, the author has given the meaning of the word taken from Oxford English Dictionary-Dimple : any slight surface depression. With this psychic defect, she naturally reacts in a peevish way to all the things around her. The lake reminds her of death : "She hated the lakes, thought of them as death..." [Bharati Mukherjee : *Wife* (Sterling, Delhi: 1976)p. 29. Further references are to this edition-*F.A.I.*]

She does not like her new name either : "The name does not suit me" *(18)*. Her flat is "horrid". *(18)* When Amit takes her to Kwality, she feels, "He should have taken her to Trinca's". *(21)* She does not love him. Had she done that, there would not have been her craze for the ideal man constructd out of ". . . a forehead from an aspirin ad., the lips, eyes and chin from a body-builder and shoulder ads, the stomach and legs from a trousers ad. . . ". *(23)* Nor does she like the house she lives in. The "lace doilies" are for her so degrading that she wishes "She were back in her own room in Rash Behari Avenue . . ". *(30)*

UNNATURAL

She reminds one of Goneril. Goneril wants her body to be blighted with infertility. Similarly Dimple ". . . gave vicious squeezes to her stomach as if to force a vile thing out of hiding" *(30)*. It is very unnatural for a normal girl to "enjoy" the sensation of vomitting and think of getting rid of : ". . . whatever it was that blocked her tubes and pipes". *(31)* She day-dreams about sinister abortionists.

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IMMIGRANT LIVES

It is equally unnatural for any woman in Dimple's place to do the things she does. She wants to note the angry faces of men by purposely dropping on them ". . . bits of newspapers, hair balls, nail clippings, down on to the heads below,to make them jerk upward in anger". (*33*)

ABNORMAL, PSYCHIC & FRUSTRATED

She is an abnormal human being : "Sleeping was worse than staying awake, for then she was sucked into the centre of cone-shaped emotions that made her sweat, cry loudly, sit up in bed". (*34*)

Dimple is a psychic study of an abnormal woman. She has nothing to do with the problem of immigrants, Therefore, she angers her husband by making fun of his dress, spilling curry on his shirt front. She goes to the extent of condemning the gifts he brings for her. The height of her abnormality reaches when she skips her way to abortion :

"She had skipped rope until her legs grew numb and her stomach burned; then she had poured water from the heavy bucket over her head, shoulders, over the tight little curve of her stomach. She had poured until the last of the blood washed off her legs; then she had collapsed. (*42*)

Part two of *Wife* deals with her eccentricities abroad. At three A.M., she starts "beating Amit's back with her fists", over the problem of Amit's snoring in bed. (*86*) In India, she hated Amit's house, here in New York, "She hated the Sens' apartment, hated the sofa-bed, the wall to wall rug". (*88*) Her hatred for Amit continues with unabated intensity : "She wanted Amit to be infallible, intractable, god–like, but with a boyish charm . . .". (*89*) All this leads to her insomnia : ". . . She envied them their sleep. She thought of sleeping bodies as corpses". (*97*)

DRIVEN BY DESPAIR

Despair sets in her life. She thinks : ". . . marriage had betrayed her, had not provided all the glittery things she had imagined . . .". (*102*) Born out of this frustration are her ". . . seven ways to commit suicide in Queens". (*102*) From her suicidal thoughts, springs the idea of murdering her husband :

"Her own body seemed curiously alien to her, filled with hate, malice, an insane desire to hurt, yet weightless, almost airborne." (*117*)

Her TV watching stuns her by the incredible violence. It becomes a diabolical trap, a forment without hope of either release or relief. Even the apartment objectifies the psychic decay and degeneration : "There were too many images of corrosion within the apartment". (*127*)

Her bodily reaction is expressed through her eating habits : "After the fifth spoonful she realised she was not hungry, was, on the contrary, feeling ill, and had spilled milk and cereal flakes on her clothes".(*128*)

In her idleness, she dreams of catching diseases ". . . leukemia was the most glamorous". (*128*) She hurts Amit with the kitchen knife on the plea of protecting herself.

BROKEN ASHTRAY— A SYMBOL

When Ina Mullik comes to Dimple, for "her life was falling apart", Dimple also realises : ". . . Ina's unhappiness was contagious". (*134*) Amit thinks that Ina is breaking their marital peace by keeping Dimple talking on phone, and forcing him to eat his breakfast all by himself.

When Leni breaks the rhinoceros-shaped ashtray, Dimple thinks it is symbolic of her freedom from exploitation by housework and fear for self-expression :

"She decided, it was best to regard the broken ashtray as an end of an era in her own life." (*148*)

But no where in the novel, Amit seems to have exploited her cruelly by either burdening her with house-hold work or by neglecting her pleasures in life. He is always worried about her well-being. All along we feel that there is some thing chilling and clenched about her. Therefore, they converse without communication, live together while remaining strangers.

Dimple's frenzied imagination is in a whirl all the while. Such neurotic fantasy is evident while she pours tea in Leni's cup : "After Leni removed her cup, Dimple kept on pouring. . .over the tray. . .till the pregnant-bellied tea–pot was empty and Leni and Ina were standing and shaking her, "Dimple, Dimple, stop it". (*152*)

This act is linked up with her observations with nine ways of dying : ". . .set fire to sari made of synthetic fibre; head in oven; nick wrist with broken glass in a sink full of scalding dishwater; starve; fall on bread–knife while thinking of Japanese samurai revivals . . .".(*154*)

DERANGED BY *TAEDIUM VITA* AND POSSESSED

Thus, *Wife* is full of morbid thoughts arising out of Dimple's *taedium vitae*. New York has nothing to do with her obsession. She should have thought of committing suicide even in India. The stages in her mental derangement are developed meticulously. Before she commits her husband's murder, she starts getting afraid of the things around her :

"Everything scared her : the sputtering of the radiators, the brown corduroy sofa with depressions. . . the needles in the rug, the ironing board . . . the leger prints, the cactus that had not flowered the way it was supposed to, the smudgy wide windows behind the dining table. . . ". (*156*)

Her husband appears no more than "chimera". She thinks that she is possessed by "some monster" She feels that she has lost her balance. ". . .a creature of serpentine curls and heaving bosom that would erupt indiscreetly through one of Dimple's orifices". (*158*) Her TV world merges with the world of imagination and consequently leaves her in confusion" . . .between what she had seen on TV and what she had imagined". (*157*)

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IMMIGRANT LIVES (*Contd.*)

While waiting on the platform for the train to arrive, she thinks of containers for her husband's ashes, should he die a sudden death. And wonders . , ."What happened to the bits of bone and organs that were charred but not totally consumed ?" (*168*).

THE VOICE OF MADNESS

Ultimately she gives up watching TV—"it was becoming the voice of madness" (*176*). And that leads to her decision to "kill . . . Amit and hide his body in the freezer" (*195*). This idea makes her reconcile herself to the culture shock that Amit thinks of happening all the time to Indian wives. That idea of murdering Amit makes her feel very American somehow, "Almost like a character in a TV series" (*195*). And her American frenzy accomplishes her wish :

"She sneaked up on him and chose a spot, her favourite spot just under the hairline, where the mole was getting larger and browner, . . . she brought her right hand up and with the knife stabbed the magical circle once, twice, seven times . . .". (*213*)

The various stages of Dimple's psychic depression show "the progressive cracking up of an essentially neurotic sensibility fed on popular advertisement fantasies. . ." [M. Sivaramkrishnan, *Ibid.*, (p. 85).] But this is not all to be said about it.

Dimple is conjured up as Kali—the death goddess. She owns responsibility for killing the cacti. ". . . even the hardy little ivies and geraniums . . .". (*188*)

WHO IS THE VICTIM ?

If the jacket of the novel claims its theme to be docility and submissiveness in Dimple, it is a thematic failure. Dimple has been portrayed free and rebelling throughout the novel. She has no inhibition in expressing whatever she feels. On the contrary, it is Amit Vasu who is a victim, in India as also in New York. His murder signifies how an innocent, duty-conscious husband falls a prey to the neurotice madness of his wife.

It is Amit who tempts her to drink beer to "celebrate" his job and her "Americanization". (*120*) Her hesitation in drinking Liefraumilch springs from her own idea of Amit's restrictions. Similarly, her repression from wearing pants and sweaters is self-imposed : "I just don't want to start all this . ." (*154*) It is callous of her to feel : "Amit did not feed her fantasy life; he was merely the provider of small material comforts". (113) In this, she is unfair to Amit, as she ranks him with "blender, colour T. V., cassette tape-recoder, stereo, in order of conveniene". It reminds us of the world of Pope's *The Rape of the Lock*. Her fear of Amit's restrictions on going American are in excess of her freedom and liberty that she enjoys with Amit. Therefore, the novel falls short of its thematic intent.

TROUBLED SPIRITS

I began the discussion of the novels with cross references to *Kim* only, because Tara and Dimple are troubled spirits, belonging nowhere in the end. It could be said that Kim is truly Indian and not English. This cannot be said about the protagonists of Bharati Mukherjee's novels. Her novels find parallel in not only Chaudhuri's *The Continent of Circe* with his transplanted Indo-European spirit wandering with nowhere to rest his head, but in the fictionlization of wandering Australian spirit in Koch's *Across the Sea Wall*..

Wife can also be studied from the feminist's point of view. According to a few, Dimple is considered as a victim of her husband's dreams of winning comfort for her. Instead, he keeps her on the doles of his American friends. All her neurotic behavior springs from her subjugation. She is big with a child much against her desire. Her rebellion rather than the manipulative behaviour, nonconformity instead of normal attitude to things and people around her, the flagrant disregard for her husband's wishes as opposed to approval-seeking stance—are blamed on Amit's failure in America.

However, sympathy of men for Amit is aroused at Dimple's expense. Amit is submissive. Such antithetical response makes it a divided novel. It is because of the "conflict of intention" in it that it is a less perfect novel than *The Tiger's Daughter.*

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FORTUNE'S BEGGAR

A Poem by RASHBEHARI GHOSH

Beyond rivers and mountains
mights and heights
of mortals and immortals
with dowers and powers
is the Kingdom of Lord Shiva
an idle half-clad beggar
turning reaches into ashes divine
smeard random riding His bovine
looking ageless puffing herbs in cold
treading traceless with begging-bowl
blessing braves with strange arms to win or fall.
Lord Himself
the multitude in one
is the spouse of 'Annapurna'
son-in-law of 'Mahesh'
friend of 'Kuber'
and the father of 'Ganesha'
owning riches, success and wisdom
showering each drop ceaseless on the Kingdom.

What scheme of fate destined Him
a poor vagabond beyond our dream ?

Dr. Rashbehari Ghosh is University Professor of English, (Lindsay Club Road) Dhanbad.

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From My Book-Shelf

Book Reviews in English

Karnail Singh

As to any other sophisticated literature, book reviewing is native to English literature. As a matter of fact, when a people attains a certain degree of material prosperity, it is but natural that its pursuits may tend to become cultural. As Raymond Williams would have it : 'Culture is a whole way of life, whether we take it horizontally or vertically, temporally or spatially". In such a situation, literature *inter alia*, plays a significant role in promoting culture. The written word gains supremacy and the media are directed to instil it in the individual psyche Its function s not only descriptive but also interpretative. In a way, t is aimed at correcting the taste and promoting the understanding and enjoyment of the reader. Claude Levi-Strauss designates this process as 'mutation of nature into culture'.

BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN WRITTEN WORD & THE READER

To be sure, books, journals and periodicals are an integral part of this mutation. In his prosaic life, the common reader tries to go through them but selectively. Occasionally, he may read them between the lines, but mostly in passing. He may not be able to read certain books at all, for want of time. Of course, he may simply read their blurbs. Sometimes, he has an occasional glance at the rubrics of books and tries to judge or misjudge them. With a view to bridging the gap between the written word and the reader, the mediation of book reviewing comes to be a must.

As for English literature, it goes to reflect the temper of a growing, developing people. The printed page has its say in the life of an average Englishman. The dailies, monthlies or quarterlies try to interpret the written word for him. It may be said that among other periodicals, the *Blackwood's Magazine* dominated the literary-critical scene in nineteenth-century England. That it shattered the reputation of John Keats and upheld Lord Byron's, is a common-place in the history of book reviewing.

SOME 20TH CENTURY PERIODICALS

In the twentieth century, the *Criterion* (*1922–1939*), *Scrutiny* (*1932–1953*) and *Essays in Criticism* (*1952–.....*)—to name only a few—have figured prominently. These periodicals were edited by T.S. Eliot, F.R. Leavis and F.W. Bateson. Whereas Eliot's purpose was literary-critical and religio-cultural, Leavis's was 'local analysis' of a work, but Bateson's has been creative-exploratory with a societal tilt. Different contributors were supposed to write articles, review-articles and reviews within these conceptual frameworks. However, in the States, the situation has been rather different. A pluralistic approach informs the literary-critical periodicals. *The Partisan Review* and *New Left Review*, in a way, champion Marxist type of literary criticism. *The Sewanee Review* and the *Southern Review* have a formalist slant. *The Critical Inquiry* and *Diacritics* are concerned with semiotic and deconstructive analyses of different texts.

THE INDIAN SCENE

On the Indian literary scene, *Indian Book Chronicle* (*Jaipur*), *The Literary Criterion* (*Mysore*) *New Quest* (*Pune*), *The Journal of Literary Criticism* (*Allahabad*), *The Indian Journal of American Studies* (*Hyderabad*) and the *Journal of Indian Writing in English* (*Gulbarga*)—to name only a few—are worthy of note. Like their English and American counterparts, these periodicals are, in their own ways, aimed at correcting the taste and promoting the understanding and enjoyment of the reader. Even *The Hindustan Times*, *The Statesman*, *The Times of India*, *The Tribune*, *Indian Express* and many other dailies publish reviews and review-articles at least once a week.

MY EXPERIENCES & CHALLENGES

As for my personal interest in review-writing, I may not be in a position to say exactly when I set myself this task. Still, I fainty recollect that it was in 1957, that I wrote the first review. At the time I was a student of M.A English. My teacher gave me a book of poetry by one Mr. Bholi. At first, I was a little hesitant, but later I agreed to that. Mr. Bholi seemed to have been fed on the fare of pictorial-cum-sensuous type of poetry written by Edmund Spenser. It was neither lyrical nor dramatic. Rather, it was narrative. The review was welcomed by the readers especially, for I had not written it in a flattering or derogatory manner. But I had tried to see things as they were. At the time, I may say, I was under the influence of Mathew Arnold.

From that time on, I have been writing reviews and review-articles for different journals and periodicals. In this connection *The Indian Book Chronicle*, *The Literary Criterion*, *New Quest and The Courier* (*London*) are worthy of note. I make bold to say that my reviews have never been unwelcome guests. The editors have been nice enough to host them more warmly than I expected. I do not know why this is so; but I must share with you something. My approach is seldom academic. I avoid trading on abstractions. My primary concern is the written word, its shades, timbre and tone. The analysis entails a deeper layer, what may be called socio-psychological. Words have their context, but when they filter through the psyche of an artist, they begin to behave differently. Such is the creative process. Call this the shaping power of imagination or the linguistic structure of the unconscious.

ESTABLISHED CANONS CHALLENGED

In classical art, roughly beginning with Aristotle and coming up to T.S. Eliot, the main consideration which weighs with the critic or for that matter, the reviewer, is whether a piece of composition, literary or otherwise, has been realised; that is to say, whether a particular presentation recaptures the situation, event

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Book Reviews in English *(Continued)*

or emotion by means of images, signs and icons deployed by the writer. Such a canon has met with a challenge in the late seventies and eighties. The reviewer's main concern is close examination of the interpretant, which may tend to arouse feelings and emotions which are not *out there*, but come into their own in the consciousness of the reviewer when he has an encounter with the text. This has been phrased 'subjective correlative' in striking contrast to T.S. Eliot's 'objective correlative'. Furthermore, the reviewer does not restrict himself to a particular response. It is likely to alter on each fresh reading. Say, each fresh reading is a revelation in its own way. It is a producer's rather than a consumer's response, what has been designated as 'writerly' by Roland Barthes. That way, the more informed a reviewer is, the more competent he will be to see the ever shifting morphology of signifiers.

PRESENT-DAY CRITIC

Unlike the Anglo-American New Critics for whom, in all probability, the form is the thing, the reviewer of the eighties and ninety seldom tries to reach a transcendental signified. He visualises that a phantasmagoric something is coming up to the surface of his mind for verbalisation, but when it does come, he becomes sceptical of that and refers it back to the unconscious for feedback. This tension between conscious formulation and its unconscious rupture is always at work. Say, each trace is under erasure, but when the erasure does its work, the reviewer visualises another trace ready for being erased Thus the reviewer is always face to face with undecidables, aporias and differences. This amounts to writing a sort of ghost text, almost akin to the original text, but whereas the latter is always given, the former is for ever held in solution. Such a diacritical process is at once attracting and deluding, but devoid of seriousness, it can turn into legerdemain.

DOING MY BIT

As regards my own practice, I have been writing quite a large number of reviews and review-articles from time to time and contributing them to *The Literary Criterion*, *New Quest* and *Indian Book Chronicle*— to note only a few. I do not feel like cataloguing them, but I should say that some of them are about literary criticism, others are about short stories and still others are about poetry and travelogues. Ordinarily, I go through the text of the work in hand from end to end and underline its excellences and limitations. Certain books I have to study twice, thrice and even four times. The traces which I glean lie inert in my mind until they, willingly or unwillingly, transmute themselves into the structure of my response. I am always on the guard against abstractions, cliches and jargon. The reviewer, I think, should try to produce a liberating, delighting and sustaining effect on the reader and arouse his curiosity for the original. I think I am doing my bit that way.

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A TEXT BOOK FOR COMMERCE STUDENTS

Prasanta K. Ghosh : OFFICE MANAGEMENT

Sultan Chand & Sons, New Delhi (1989) VIII Ed, Rs. 25, pp. 438

Reviewed by Kapil Dev

After agricultural, industrial and commercial revolutions, perhaps we are now passing through an 'office management revolution.' For smooth operation and control of any modern undertaking, the role of office management is crucial.

Office work is now treated not as a secondary activity of an enterprise. Modern offices comprise of a variety of scientific equipments, tools or gadgets of automation and mechanisation, electronic machines, computers, scientific working methods, new techniques of information processing, communication system space planning, scientific lay-out and standardised working procedures. The role of office management is important for the attainment of organisational goal and is, therefore, treated as the catalytic agent of modern management.

The book under review, aimed at graduate students of commerce, consists of sixteen chapters, five appendices and one index of technical terminology. It starts with some general information regarding the function, importance, principles and scope of office activities. Among various functions of an office, the collection and processing of data, forms, management and control, report and precis writing, recording and information management and management of personnel are most important. For effective performance, any office requires suitable accommodation, scientific lay-out, time and labour saving devices and above all, efficient and motivated crew. An office network must provide its efficient services at minimum costs; and to achieve this goal, work measurement, fixing standards and work simplification are unavoidable. All these topics have been discussed thoroughly in the book.

Its appendices cover postal services which are useful in office operation, data processing techniques, the syllabi of various universities and professional institutions, and question papers of various examining bodies and additional questions.

Proper recording is the sin qua non of up-to-date and informed decision-making. Therefore, the very existence of modern business, industry and other service institutions is based upon effective record management. This refers to all kinds of correspondence and other documents which are created, received and stored in any office. It includes contracts, letters, invoices, cheques, vouchers, statistics, price lists, catalogues, cost statements, personnel matters, tax records etc. Fully appreciating the same, the author has discussed in detail filing systems and indexing, office correspondence, form-management, report and precis-writing,collection, processing and recording of data in five separate chapters.

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THE MYSTERIOUS BREED OF INDIAN MIDDLE CLASS

L. N. Gupta : INSIDE THE BLACK HOLE
Vishwa Bharati Prakashan, Dhanwate Chambers, Sitabuldi, Nagpur, pages 109, price Rs. 25/-

Review by P. Raja

L.N. Gupta has been an active journalist and fiction writer for the last 27 years. His stories are very much appreciated by lovers of Indian writing in English. The fact that several of his short stories are translated into Gernan shows the recognition he has gained abroad too. Ten years ago, when Writers' Workshop, Calcutta published L.N. Gupta's first volume of short stories titled *The Stench and Other stories* (1980), newspapers like *The Statesman* and *The Hindu* applauded his skill as a story-teller. The book contained 14 short stories that recorded his tragic view of life. The stories spoke against hunger, poverty and the excessive long-suffering endurance of Man. They betrayed the life encircled by frailties and frustrations, tragedy and despair.

L.N. Gupta's second volume of short stories *Inside the Black Hole* is yet another document that records his tragic view of life. The sixteen stories in this volume try to portray different aspects of the life of middle classes. As he confesses in his 'Preface', "I am writing on Middle Class themes, because I was born in a middle class family, continue to belong to it and as such know and feel its ethos and pathos from a close quarter."

Bonded labour, unemployment, gossips, suicide, office politics and violence form the subject matters of these sixteen short stories. 'The Horror at the Flat' tells the story of a wife living on a crowded main road. As she is a working woman, the jealous housewives in the neighbourhood gossip about her, and she moves to a fiat, dreaming of a gossip-free world. But to her horror, she finds that there is little safety in these cage-like flats, for no one cares for the others. Before she could realize that it is better to be gossiped about than completely neglected and ignored, she burns herself after a washerman rapes her in her own flat in broad daylight, while her neighbours give deaf ears to her cries and sobs.

'The Holy Fire' is an admirable psychological story in which L.N. Gupta characterises a husband called by his wife "impotent" and another wife branded by her husband "cold". Their mutual discovery and the holy fire that surges in them, and their return to their respective spouses with confidence are beautifully narrated. What they borrowed from each other to provide to their spouses deserves a separate study.

A traditional housewife who hates to wear sleeveless blouses; a modern office-going wife who tells her husband, "Unless you improve I will have to seek new pastures"; a young husband whose conscience asks him, "What if someone else slept with your wife ?" whenever the thought of flirting with somebody else's wife occurs to him; the para-vendor's son who lures more customers than his father could manage, by simply replacing the pictures of the gods with that of cine-stars and political leaders in the shop; a writer's wife who quarrels with her husband for writing stories that fetch nothing but rejection slips; a young wife who attends to her husband, bed-ridden for the past two years with cancer but finds a mate for herself even before the death of her husband purely for her own safety—these are a few of the memorable characters we meet in this book And we realize with Swami of 'Swami and Sukhanand' how we are exploited in the name of God, while the temple trustees become millionaires and industrialists.

L.N. Gupta portrays a world of guile and craftiness. full of scoundrels and self-centred men. He shows us how tongues wag frantically and scandals spread. He advocates the remarriage of widows and widowers, finds fault with men who are always on the rush to catch the train and so have "no time to talk to friends, no time to remember the smile of a girl friend or a woman colleague at lunch..." Leaders who swill bottles of whisky and invoke the memory of Gandhi and deliver inspiring sermons on prohibition, parents who indulge in extra-marital relationships, yet refuse to allow their daughters to get married to their lovers, become L.N. Gupta's targets of attack.

L.N. Gupta's stories found in this second volume are typical examples of what 'a mysterious breed' we human beings are. As we move from story to story, we feel that it is all a moving experience.

Writer, poet and critic, P. Raja is also our Editorial Associate at Pondicherry.

A Text Book For Commerce Students (*Contd.*)

The basic function of a modern office is to procure information, process and arrange it and finally record to communicate it to the concerned managers. Hence, through information management, an office helps its management in taking timely decisions and ensuring performance. It also helps the management to keep in touch with the "external" environment and create a favourable public view of the entity.

The book devotes two separte chapters to the personnel aspects of office: recruitment and selection process, training, management placements, promotion, transfer, incentives etc. Due importance has been given to the 'cordial relations between office staff and management' by incorporating a separate chapter on the subject.

A large number of quotations, definitions and opinions have been incorporated at appropriate places. The appendices at the end enhance the utility of the book. With its emphasis on applied aspects of the subject, the book can also prove ureful for the practising managers.

Dr. Kapil Dev Sharma teachrs in the P.G. Deptt. of Business Administration, Govt. Commerce College, Kota.

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A Surge Forward

Uma Gautam : INNER WEATHER

Writers' Workshop, Calcutta

Reviewed by Virendra Bhatia

"*Inner Weather*", the collection of poems by Uma Gautam is a lapidary product of a deliberate but well-turned out poetic craftsmenship. Using the well-known techniques of the less understood but widely-known English poets like Emily Dikinson and Sylvia Plath, the poet has remarkably succeeded in consolidating her poetic experience under an epigrammatic seal.

As is with all confessional poetry, almost every poem sharply focuses on "a psychological moment" of an intense personal experience of tension. An intensly alive consciousness is pitched against the cribbing forces of "the seductive syllogism"*(page 23)*.

She seems to be passionately shaking herself free of the shackles of regimentation, conventions and the moulding moality of the time. The life of *Self* is realized only through its freedom from the crushing and deadening weight of supressive social mores and sham morality :

"Sniff the town
Whirling wild and strong
Bang the doors
Ruffle the passing head
Speak your damnest truth". (*page 17*)

The ideas of life and death are conveyed in terms of struggle-liberation and acceptance-dead-lock sets of values :

Why should'nt we
After pursuing a demon duty
And checking a wayward sigh
Falling in line all the time
Why should'nt we
After burning in vain
Turning insides out to please
Gift ourselves
To the Cause of Living
Why should'nt we ? " (*page 14*) .

Life bounded by artificial customs and "banal morality", if reviewed all over again, brings realisation that :

"You never existed
You were just another
Old wive's tale". (*page 15*)

You begin to realize that your life has been a foolishly boring story, told and written over and over again by custom-ridden society.

Death, therefore, is the life spent on/the commonplace cliche's.

The *Life-Death* and the *Self-Society* juxtapose is sustained all along. The collection, in fact, begins with a gentle dig at those over whose heads the larger significance of the poetrty of *Self* passes unnoticed :

"Don't speak of that
Which rests close to your heart
They tell me—
Confessionals are not entertained
We regret
And do send
A self-addressed envelop
Next time". (*page 9*)

Loneliness and sorrow, paradoxically, consist in the happiest but unshared moments of grasping the inner-most truths of life.

She seems at the same time to be jeering at those who do not understand her, cheering "My Noblest Moment of Insight" and fearing to be left alone.

Her images are deft, crisp and concise, effusing colours, sounds and a flood of feelings :

"I look at your painting
And the fairy colours
Flood through me agin" (*page 22*)

And : "Bang the doors
Ruffle the passing head" etc. (*page 17*)

Her style is colloquial, compelling the reader's attention and engaging our thought with frequent interrogations (in many poems) :

"Do you see
the Brave spectacle
of a Flower
That seeks its Peace
In the raging storm ?" (*page 11*)

"Why should'nt we ?" (*page 14*) "Write to me How you wear Your face ... feelings" etc.—(*page 15*). Can I assign to happiness ? "(*page 21*).

"I get what I want
And worse still
What
Do
I
Want ? (*page 30*)

The quick questioning sessions lend a great force and significance to the scope and meaning of poems, leaving the readers to continue to search for more meaning. These enigmatic interrogations are mostly adressed "to the Cause of Living" and "To live even for a moment in this life-time".—(*page-23*). And Life What's that ? (*page 24*). Such are some of the most repeated questions.

"Real Living", on the other hand, begins with the crumbling of the cribs of *Self* and with an awareness of a larger and deeper relationship of *Self* with the flux of life :—

"Stretched out
Against the wind
Arms and legs
And cheeks
And soles
Ravished
By an afternoon Sun
You have kissed alive
My dead days". (*Continued*)

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Rashbehari Gosh : Two More Poems

POETS' CORNER

Forever Hunger

The joy of living, marvels and excellences
feed volcanic process to induce
impulses of hunger like atoms
exhilarating creative endeavours
of all Adam and Eve
saturating unshrunk passions for searches
on plenty and scanty to provide
vibrant hunger on crests
of unravelled truths burried latent
as material longings and spiritual quests.

The Burning Formats

The God of 'Fire'
the primitive 'Sun'
celestial energy of 'Indra'
bully earth despots
fizzing flames into silence.
When events turn blazing
kaleidoscopically fed
from crucifying irony
of accidents and protests
to the orgy of burning spree,
the monsters field mock-seriousness
like charred moths rendering poetry
lightning-struck kin for elegy
monk's immolation as Budhist testimony
dead-old in flames urging philosophy.
Burnt passengers and miners underground
are accidents of cruel destiny.
Innocents burnt in communal orgy
and harijans burnt alive are voiced
a shame on democracy.
Burnt elites in air cause expensive tasks
burning nations drag powers at dawn or dusk
before nuclear explosion on land
brings dead-end of the living band.
What tale the young wives cause
when burnt alive at their in-laws' ?
How stricken is your heart when fresh widows
are forced to the flames of 'Sati' by frauds ?
Who will burn his own finger in such a fire
throwing hounds into the flames of pyres ?

Dr. Rashbehari Ghosh is University Professor of English, Lindsay Club Road, Dhanbad—826001.

A SURGE FORWARD *(Continued)*

It is an "unawareness" of this deeper and essential relationship which lies at the root of our alienation, and shuts us off from realizing the infinite life :

"I don't know
And you don't know
What deadens my eyes
And makes me
Hard to live with.
Let us meet each other
today."
(*page 29*)

Her only glaring weakness seems to be an inclination to substitute a direct description and a statement about feelings for a visual image :

"I felt alone
only when I was happy
My sorrow
I can cope with"
(*page 10*)

And a tendency to preaeh directly :

"Stop beating drums
Of your ancient culture
Your precious heritage
And your glorified
War horses"
(*page 23*)

It is a noticeable flaw, as it is the choice and arrangement of images, living and concrete, which distinguish a work of art from an abstraction.

She could glean images and paint word pictures more cautiously.

Sh. Virendra Bhatia is Lecturer in English in the Govt. Post-Graduate College, Sirohi (Raj).

Seen But Not Heard

A Poem by **R. Rabindranath Menon**

The dinner drew to close and coffee came
to vest a minor seduction with a tame
end or beginning, and a decent name.
Life's drama lies in the lovely masquerade
developed not so much to hide as to parade
a contrived situation as the natural outflow,
and dope the senses deep enough to let go.
Casually watching the pair from two tables afar
I could see and surmise, but not overhear.

Suddenly she looks him straight in the eyes,
her lips quiver for a fight, but the anger dies
or is made to, in what then comes as light
banter and a right pause that truly might
be interpreted as the calm in which the qualms
of passion. She shows herself unwittingly drawn
as moth to flame. The green grass is well-mown
and the turf ready in turn to played upon.
Romance blooms like Jack's bean-stalk grown
from seed before our eyes to size of a tree
in the magic land of liberated on a spree.

Playing too hard to win, and then be won,
has the finesse of first class tennis, fun
certainly to see. The deft back-hand drives
bring in honey to starved hives,
the queen bee appearing more than satisfied
with tbe worker's ardour and overly beatified
promise and performance. The coffee-break
gives final touches to the game and set
to be played by both with (out) ball or net.

After paying the bill they walked hand in hand,
two hail-stones fallen, rolling in the sand.

Dr. R. Rabindranath Menon has published 10 volumes of verse. His next "Sounds of Silence" is under print. He leads a retired creative life at Bangalore.

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A BOOK BAZAR COMES TO TOWN

An Afternoon's Experience by B. L. Bajaj

To the people of Rajasthan, especially book-lovers of Jaipur the National Book Fair (Dec. 29, 1990 to Jan. 6, 1991) gave a unique chance to live through a never-to-be-forgotten experience. The crowded and thronged venue had a packed display of books in Hindi, English, Urdu and Rajasthani and several other languages on all topics and subjects, academic or of a general popular nature. There were some rare books worth lakhs of rupees and popular topical books of interest to children and the housewives, casual readers and the more serious or enlightened readers : on all possible subjects and themes viz story-books, novels, poetry books, comics and text-books, books for reference and library volumes on arts, culture and sciences etc. The role of the electronic media in education was evident through recorded casettes for learning languages and allied subjects.

However, there was the constant pinch of limited spare money in the pockets as against the high and inflated prices of most books. Even institutional libraries were hard put to it to go in for volumes they thought were useful or desirable for their patrons. (I, for one, went through the precincts as a bewildered casual visitor.) Some institutions with a missionary zeal, like the Gita Press, were however, selling some worth-while titles at throw-away prices. An attractive or glamorous book on Time Management, on glossy paper, may have cost a fortune on a "five-star" stall; but as an attractive calendar depicting the gist of Time Management was available on the Gita Press stall, just for one rupee.

In a jhonpa-like round stall, under the thatch roof, were available hundreds of titles, available for translation from one language into another. My curiosity aroused, I showed interest in a book by Mahatma Gandhi in English, published by the Navjeevan Trust, Ahemadabad, for translation into Hindi. But to my surprise, on subsequent enquiry, the publisher informed me that the book had already been translated. To that extent, information given at this stall was incomplete and inaccurate.

I was also looking for a book "*India from Curzon to Nehru and After*" by Gurga Das, as I was interested in that recent period of our history, and the borrowed copy of the book had to be returned. But I was disappoined. I was told that the publishers, Rupa Paper-backs had not put any stall in the Fair; and on other stalls where I asked, the book was not available. Perhaps the book has already dated; but some of us need to refer to that period of transition and change.

To appease my urge to learn Urdu and know something about the great religion of Islam, I could purchase in the Fair some elementary books on Learning Urdu, about *Namaz* (the muslim prayers) and a copy of concise *Koran.*

There was an attractive volume depicting rare gold coins of India, available at a stall of the Calcutta Museum for Rs 200/—quite a sum for my pocket. I hesitated, only to repent my decision later on. However, from this stall I could purchase some beautiful reproductions of miniature art paintings of different schools such as Kangra, Bundi etc.

At the Rajneesh Trust stall, I could purchase a latest book of the thoughts of Rajneesh, *Bhagwan* or *Acharya* or whatever epithet or adjective might be added to that name. A thought provoker of our century, he has left a deep impress on the lives and minds of thousands of persons in India and abroad while he lived, and in his death too. Learned as he was, he was unsurpassable in his style, his communication, his logic and approach.

The Rajasthani language is making its presence felt in the books market, slowly but surely. Stalls by M/s Rajpurohit Publishers of Bikaner and Bhumika Prakashan of Laxmangarh, besides others, were offering Rajasthani language publication. Sh. Deokishan of Rajpurohit Publishers presented me with a copy of his latest publication : *Rajasthan mein Rajnaitik Nari Ratna* (Notable Women Political Leaders of Rajasthan) along with a copy of the Rajasthani magazine, *Marudhar Jyoti.*

At another stall, my daughter, a student of English bonght a pocket size Oxford English Dictionery to be her companion everywhere.

Books, books and books—there were lakhs of them on display. The Fair was like a vast and unfathomable ocean; one could drown deep in it in the absence of proper and patient guidance.

The temptation is always there in a bazar display of such dimensions and varieties'. But one has to be selective and choosy, at least to keep within the limits of one's pocket, the time one can spare for perusal of books and the constraint of space to keep them properly, within reach for study, and to be able to retrieve them later on, as and when neccessary.

A middle-class professional like me and my family have our limitations on all these scores. And so we returned from the Fair with our meagre packets, but a heavy load to frustrations and sighs of alases ! If only many books could have been reasonably priced !

Sh B.L. Bajaj is Chief Accounts Officer, Department of Commercial Taxes, Rajasthan.

IBC would welcome similar contributions of our Readers' Experiences in the Wonderland of Books and Encounters with Books. *Editor's*

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OF EXPEDIENCY & ETHICS IN POLITICS

Narasingha P. Sil : KAUTILYA'S ARTHASASTRA : A Comparative Study.
(Peter Lang Publishing Inc. $ 32. 95)

Review by Udayan Majumdar

No political thinker of the Mauryan period (321-185 B.C.) attracted, and has continued to attract, more controversy than Kautilya – an astute political scientist, materialist philosopher *par excellence*, author of the renowned *Arthashastra* (a treatise on statecraft), a vulpine politican who slew the son of King Dhanananda and put Chandragupta Maurya on the throne, became his prime minister and urged him to conquer the world.

This erudite brahman from Taxila was at first acrimoniously rejected as being the purveyor of "crooked recipe for benevolent but unscrupulous kingship", monstrously ambitious, malevolent and profane enough to make even Machiavelli appear compassionate and humane, and then later, hailed enthusiastically as a model of the soundest political wisdom and as a *Rajarshi* who attained *siddhi*.

KEY QUESTION

Aimed at stripping away the myths and polemics which have grown up around Kautilya and his writings on morals and the principles of government, this book by Professor Sil (a member of the History Faculty at Western Oregon State College and currently teaching European and Asian History), draws upon recent developments in Kautilya scholarship. The tone is revisionist, but the key question is essentially the same that has long exercised scholars of political thought : namely, the problems of expediency and ethics in political conduct.

Sil includes several quotations, not only from the *Arthashastra*, but also from Plato's *Republic*, Aristotle's *Politics*, and Machiavelli's *The Prince*, and, as a result, he is able to demonstrate the immediacy and power of the *Arthashastra* and at the same time to bring out the disorderliness and vituperation which increasingly appeared in Kautilya's writings.

FOUR THINKERS WITH A SIMILAR BASE

The most significant point to emerge is that Kautilya needs to be studied as a serious and innovative political thinker in his own right. Especially so because, from a conventional western perspective, the *Arthashastra* cannot be viewed as a contribution to political philosophy. It does not deal with perennial questions of *episteme politike*. Though this view is not new, it is given substance by Prof. Sil breaking with the common practice of assessing Kautilya's superiority to or equality with Plato, Aristotle, and Machiavelli. Prof. Sil examines Kautilya's work along with those of the three European masters, purely and primarily in the light of their individual merits – logical and ideological. He judges Kautilya's writings against the apparent Hindu philosophical norms of transcendence established by the *Dharmic* tradition.

Kautilya is shown to have arrived at his ideas on statecraft by a different route from Plato, Aristotle, and Machiavelli, though Prof. Sil contends that all the four ancient masters derived their outlook on human society from a fundamentally similar ideological base. Sil writes,"..... all of them have almost similar notions of human nature, of the need for stability in the commonwealth, and of the desirability of righteousness in collective political behaviour."

Kautilya's views were shaped by an amalgam of materialism and spiritual considerations; and it was on this basis that he advised the ruler, only "to enjoy pleasures which are not against *dharma* and *artha*", for they are "bound up with one another", and if "any one is pursued in excess, it harms itself and the other."

Sil shows too that Kautilya's increasing preoccupation with material well-being can be grasped only as a product of the *Arthashastra* school's reactions against the rigorism of Buddhism. He emphasizes that Kautilya (a realist unlike Plato) was not the architect of an "ordered sphere that would integrate man into the eternal and thereby emancipate him from the disorderly world of change and decay", thus drawing attention instead to Kautilya's injunctions against unsuccessful rulers.

A MANUAL

As a result of Sil's thoughtful analysis, the *Arthasastra* turns out to be more a manual for the administrator – to help him reign successfully than a theoretical work on polity explaining the philosophy and fundamental principles of administration, or of the political science. Sil's scholarly reconstruction expands our understanding of the Kautilyan algorithm and also succeeds in ridding Kautilyaism of its aura of dubiety by locating the extent to which the appeal of Kautilya's doctrines were socially specific. It is hoped that this work (both critical and seeking to be objective at once) will help stimulate fresh discussion on Kautilya and that it does not represent Sil's last word on the most impressive protagonist of materialism in India.

Shri Udayan Majumdar is University Grants Commission Research Fellow in the Department of Sociology, University of Calcutta.

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HE WHO GAVE US THE NEW SCIENCE OF POLITICS

Sisir Bhattacharya : MACHIAVELLI :A Study of his Theory of the State, *Gitanjali Publishing House, New Delhi, (1988) xvi + 170; Rs. 150*

Review by K.Seshadri

There are some subjects of perennial interest, and though many have dealt with them, they cease to be dated if the writer uses these subjects making them relevant to the contemporary times. Machiavelli has been a great attraction to political commentators, many of whom among Indians have found a comparison between him and Chanakya irresistible. There is also a concealed admiration for the man who preached the amorality of political life and the dictum of end justifying the means. But the present book is a departure from this beaten track; and it subjects Machiavelli's thought to as merciless a criticism as Machiavelli himself would have done to those whom he did not approve of.

A REDEEMER OR OPPORTUNIST

Machiavelli was a product of an environment which was bereft of law and justice, an environment dominated by bastards and brigands. Hence he was judged by subsequent writers either as a man come to redeem his country from the degradation to which this faction-ridden and dissipated society had sunk, or as the rank opportunist that he was with the sole aim of flattering the Medici and attaining the 'national glory at any cost'.

Here the author tries to examine the propositon that to achieve a great end, one may be permitted to follow any means. Many examples are cited of this justification that successful powers put forth for their unethical actions like the bombing of Hiroshima in order to minimise human misery in a prologed war. If civilisation is to endure, there is an urgent need to examine these Machiavellian maxims which, one is ashamed to say, still survive in this century. This book seeks to do mainly this function.

In a world riven with divisive forces, progress has become almost impossible, since these have killed the very soul of the nation and the individual. Machiavellian remedies did not save the Italy of his day; and they cannot save the present world either. The author proves this proposition, thereby deviating from the beaten track of admirers of unscrupulousness in the name of *real politik*.

That way, any action of any political tyrant can be justified; and it has become a fashion among Indian political scientists to rationalise every action of the goons and hoodlums and bumpkins, and denounce those who uphold principled political stances. Creation of caste war is, in a machivellian fashion, sought to be justified that in politics one has to have a strong base in some constitutency, even if it were to wreck the overall national solidarity. That is *real- politik*.

HUMAN NATURE, ETHICS & MORALITY

Should Machiavelli be judged on the basis of one book that became popular or in the general context of his thought spread over many other works, including fiction as well ? Did he make his suggestions applicable to a specific situation ? Which, if it were true, could at least exonerate him. But as the author says, "We shall see that he did not limit his suggestions to a 'new prince' only of that age. He thought that the people of all ages were generally narrow and selfish and that human character was not changeable" *(p.2)*. Here one wonders if Machiavelli was not uttering the ugly truth, as otherwise, how do we account for the human (mis) behaviour throughout the ages being almost the same in spite of the preachings of a Buddha or a Jesus or a Gandhi ? Have they made any difference? Cynical but true!

Tracing the times and life of Machiavelli, the author shows how Machiavelli was trying to free the State from the authority of the Church, and how this process finally led to the freedom of the individual, even though Machiavelli did not intend it. The discussion of the term 'virtue', meaning in the medieval period manliness, generally practised by the upper classes and not excluded for those of low birth, is refreshingly original; and it cites the examples of Moses, Cyrus, Romulus and Theseus who, by virtue of their own capacity, could achieve great heights.

This view differed from the old virtues of asceticism, and encouraged the attainments of worldly achievements. Has Protestant ethic that Weber made so popular anything to do with this outlook ? Did the total negligence of this lead to the prostrate condition of India before every invader who ravished her ? A discussion of this sort would have been very interesting, as otherwise Machiavelli has no abiding interest to us, except as a part of the college curriculum Why was Chankaya in spirit not followed by the rulers of ancient India? We have some thoughts of similar nature in the *Gita* too, but they get submerged in the spiritutal discussion into which the religious men in India have hijacked it.

Keeping in mind that Machiavelli's teachings do not save the present world from its ills, the author says very pointedly, "In Machiavelli we find an effort to formulate it (the difference between ethics of private life and public life) rationally and he, by force of his personality, created a new science of politics. In the process of declaring the independence of this new science, he pushed the difference between ethics and politics to the extreme length and did not pay sufficient attention to their inter-dependence" *(p.17)*. Machiavelli's was a wide canvass with a broad sweep of strong colours, where there was no room for governmental institutions and other pedestrian subjects in which some of his contemporaries delved deep.

A SYSTEM OF PHILOSOPHY

Quoting a number of contemporary authors and Machiavelli's own letters to his friends, the writer has enriched the various concepts that make up the integreted philosphical system of the great Florentine, who was not advocating immorality *per se,* but advocating it in the world of ugly reality where everyone is immoral. He substantiates the difference that Machiavelli makes between individual morality and the public morality. The discussion on the use of religion and the unchangeability of man, the universal applicability in temporal and territorial dimensions of Machiavellian pronouncements (as Mussolini seems to have emphasised *(see p.22)* is presented in a manner that a reader is apt to feel that the present author himself is convinced of their validity, thereby demonstrating that he was treating his subject without prejudice and unfairness. It was interesting how Machiavelli treats religion – an ob-

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ject lesson even for the present rulers. Is it for the defence of the country even if you do not give a damn for its mumbo-jumbo ?

A great deal of importance is attached by Machiavelli to leadership and this has led the present author to draw the conclusion that he was advocating what, later on, Weber classified as charismatic leadership. This conclusion, I think, is not acutally warranted by what Machiavelli says about the leadership, if we also keep in mind about his preference for the fox to a lion. The author shows how Machiavelli has anticipated Hobbes, Nietzche (Superman), and even Herbert Simon. I will elaborate the similarity with Simon. I quote from the author *(p. 26)*. "In all our decisions", said Machiavelli, "we must consider well what presents the least inconveniences, and then choose the best, for we shall never find any course entirely free from objection". Simon also postulated the concept of 'satisficing' in decision-making. Is Simon a sort of a Machiavellian in public administration ? This is an interesting question.

NO TO EXTRA-TERRITORIAL ALLEGIANCE

Another interesting statement of Machiavelli is brought out remarkably well. If religious feelings of any group advocate allegiance to the State, there is no danger. But if it leads to extra-territorial allegiance, 'though not political, it was not to be allowed' *(p.29)*. Communal Muslim parties take note !. (Communist parties having gone with the wind !)

The delineation of the 'Lion and Fox' syndrome is one of the interesting chapters, since the author has extensively quoted from the Italian text (I wonder if he knows the language) making use of the various commentaries made by different scholars of the contemporary period. The author is right when he has criticised Machiavelli for not giving adequate attention to the diverse factors, in addition to military might that help consolidate power.....The prince who uses means described by Machiavelli can hardly inspire genuine devotion to the city and to himself" *(p. 57)* Very true ! It is such balanced criticism of the thinker that makes the exercise very different from the usual hack writings by admirers of Machiavelli. Is there not a lot of self-contradition in Machaivelli ?

ESSENTIAL MACHIAVELLI IN THOUGHT & METHODS

The essential element in Machiavelli's thought is the ever-changing nature of things and the impossibility of perfection in any thing. As the author sums up very pertinently, "In a world that is imperfect, one cannot imagine a model that is perfect' *(p. 65)*. The contribution of Machiavelli to Diplomacy and the Art of War, Machiavelli's justification of all acts of dishonesty and treachery are totally untenable *(p. 68)*. The apologia given by Machiavelli was hollow.

Machiavelli was (without knowing Marx) anticipating some of the analyses that the latter was to make much later. This is regarding the rise of the bourgeoisie and the decline of the parastical feudal order. The author has very rightly dealt with the conditions in the socio-economic field, mentioning particularly the contradictions between various groups among classes themselves, though Machiavelli was not arguing in terms of class struggles, nor in terms of materialist conception. But Machiavelli was right when he said that the major cause for exploitation is not so much economic power, though that cannot be totally ignored, but lust for political power and domination *(p. 77)*. The author shows how in the other works like the *History of Florence* (which was very much lauded by Karl Marx), *Art of War, Discourses*, Machiavelli goes into various aspects of political life; and the merit of this work is in treating equally all these books and the main book, *Prince*. This is not generally done by writers or speakers on Machiavelli.

The long chapter entitled, 'Political Doctor for the Decomposed Body-Politic' gives various examples of the degeneration of the Italian politics and the misdeeds of Cesare Borgia, and compares many situations with what happened in Moghul India under Aurangazeb. He, once again, reiterates the fact that these Machiavellian methods are futile in the long run, and the fight on the basis of higher ideological principles alone will endure, as borne out by the leadership of men like Gandhi, Nehru, Lenin and Mao *(sic !)* Of course, as long as they lived they retained their leadership. So did Stalin with all his cruelty and super-Machiavellian policies. There is a good deal of repetition that makes the reading of this chapter heavy. Many martyrs are there in history like Savanarola, Bruno, etc. But they are non-political men who did not fight for their leadership, but men who lived and sacrificed their lives for higher ideals, for great truths. These are as far away as cheese is from chalk, from both Machiavelli and Marx who, in their own way, were not much moved by lofty principles but by trying to understand human history. Machiavelli prescribed while Marx predicted, both so unsuccessfully, as subsequent events bore out. Machiavelli did not establish any ism.

A MODERNIST PHILOSOPHER OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

The apolitical nature of political science is what makes Machaivelli a modernist, a philospher who made the study of politics scientific. Scientist researching on atomic energy is not, the author says, concerned with the consequences of the devastating capability of a misdirected use of atomic energy. The political scientist should follow the technic of pure science *(p.123)*. Political experiments are not made on dead or life-less objects, and hence the same 'scientism' cannot hold good in matters social. Repeating the argument adduced earlier, the author says correctly:

"In human affairs, the efficiency of a policy is measured by the quality of citizenship which a government has been able to create. Resort to technics, skills and political artistry alone for political survival to the almost total exclusion of the first principles has not helped many a designing ruler to retain power. The game of politics is now played not by one person but by a number of persons, whose intelligence is more or less the same."

Excellently put. I would advise many politicians who are always engaged in creating a political space for themselves by rousing the base and primordial instincts in man like the caste system or religion in India that they should make a note of this factor. I would like to underline this, since it has become a fashion among political scientists *(sic)* to see cleverness and cunning as political acumen.

CONSCIENCE, ABSOLUTE MORALITY & POWER

"Conscience makes cowards of us all" does not apply to the Prince of Machiavellian mould, as contended by the

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author *(p.128)*. It applies to decent princes like Prince Hamlet of Denmark and not Cesare Borgia and the like. The importance of devoting one's self to the noble and impersonal cause gets repeated in many places.

He did not attach much importance to utopian ideas as did Plato.Even Spinoza thought that Machiavelli was not such an evil person as he was believed to be. One wishes the author had discussed Spinoza's and Bacon's arguments about their differing assessments of Machiavelli.

The author dismisses the success of Bismark in uniting Germany, Cavour's unification of Italy and his adoption of Machiavellian tactics in the arena of international relations as dubious. "But these examples do not prove beyond doubt that in politics, only double dealing would be successful. The sound politics of regeneration must start with faith in man"*(136)*. One has to counter this extreme purism by citing many examples wherein Gandhi himself was not above reproach.

The point is that absolute morality is difficult to practice much less difficult to define. Here comes the dilemma which is posed by Machiavelli. If you are very virtuous, you cannot rule a country which is not inhabited by angels. If you are unscrupulous, your rule becomes unethical and will not endure.

"We do not see how Machiavelli's state can achieve greatness if it is composed of citizens whose personality is not allowed to develop and who are, by presumption, bad men ruled by a hypocrite" *(135)*

The chapter on 'Political Morality : A Relative Theory' takes us into an interesting and some times rather naive comparisons and political examples from the days of Socrates through the medieval times with Hobbes, Rousseau and Gandhi, Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin following in a sequence according to the point discussed. Marlowe and Shakespere, people who do not belong to our age, also used the name of Machiavelli in unflattering terms.

The relevance of Machiavelli lies in the fact that human beings, instead of becoming more and more virtuous as enlightenment increases, are becoming more degenerate; and the notion that people would change is chimerical. Much as we dislike the man, we have to accept that most of what he said is true to this day; and the great saints and sages have not changed man. Even Marx'x dictum that human nature would change as the production relations change, has not been proved to be correct. This is not to justify Machiavelli, but only a plea to understand the man sympathetically as Spinoza tried to do.

The book is a thorough and consistent treatment of the philosophy of Machiavelli taking all the writings into consideration and making an overall assessment. Many Italian works are cited and comparisons with personalities of the contemporary period discussed in the Machiavellian context. This book is a very useful work to understand Machiavelli critically and thoroughly. But print is bad, the binding is worse and the price is prohibitive, thereby showing that the publisher is a machiavellian without his knowing it .

Prof. K.Seshadri is a retired academic scholar and political scientist who has authored several books and essays.

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RAUL PREBISCH AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY :

Published by Research and Information System for the Non-Aligned and Other Developing Countries (RIS), New Delhi (1987) Rs. 150/-

Review by Navin Chandra Joshi

In August, 1986, a seminar was held in New Delhi on the thoughts of Raul Prebisch on Development Economics as a fitting tribute to his memory after he died on May 6, 1986. This volume contains the proceedings, the background papers and some seminal writings of Dr. Prebisch.

Dr. Prebisch has no doubt been one of the greatest thinkers and spokesmen of the Third World in the present century. He provided a perceptive analysis of the problems of development and international economic relations. A number of eminent economists like Prof. S. Chakravarty, Dr. Manmohan Singh, Prof. P.R. Brahamanda, Dr. Krishna Bharadwaj, Dr. Mrinal Dutta Choudhary etc., participated in the seminar, along with some administrators. Dr. V.R. Panchamukhi guided the seminar as Director of RIS and has contributed quite an elaborate paper on "A Profile of Prebisch Thoughts."

CRITIQUE OF NEO-CLASSICAL THEORIES

Dr. Raul Prebisch's contribution in the field of development theory and practice began with his critique of the classical and neo-classical theories of trade and development. His basic thesis is that these theories are based on wrong assumptions in relation to the realities in the peripheries, and hence their prescriptions are incorrect. He put forth a number of arguments to assert that development experiences of the present industrialised centres are not relevant to the presently developing peripheries. He developed a new framework for the analysis of the linkages between the developed countries, which he called 'centres' and the developing countries which he called as 'peripheries'. According to him, development is the result of technical progress and the distribution of its benefits.

Technical progress leading to productivity increase occurs both in the centre and in the periphery. As productivity increases, costs per unit of output fall; and this could have variety of effects ; a fall in the prices of the output, increase in the wages of the labour, increase in the profits of the entrepreneurs, and/or an expansion of the output.

Further, Raul Prebisch's model of development was essentially a three sector model with agriculture, other primary products and manufactures as the separate sectors. He strongly argued that the process of rapid development in the Latin American region should be based more on domestic savings and domestic capital formation rather than massive inflow of foreign savings through aid or loan or private investment.

LATIN AMERICAN DEBT-TRAP

It is ironical that after years of advice from this great thinker, the Latin American countries landed themselves in the deep trap of debt burden.

Prebisch observed that the upper strata of the population (top 5 per cent) accounted for three/tenths of total consumption in Latin America, while the average consumption per household was 15 times that in the lower strata of the population.

He suggested : "If this ratio were to be reduced to 11:1 by the restriction of consumption in favour of investment, the annual rate of growth of per capita income could rise from one per cent to three per cent." It is in this way that Prebisch made an interesting distinction between distribution of income and restriction of consumption. To him, redistribution did not merely mean taking away income from the upper minority and giving it to the broad masses of population. Rather, it meant restriction of consumption of the upper strata of the population and thereby release of resources which could be diverted for capital formation aimed at raising the incomes of the lower strata of the population.

RESTRUCTURING OF SOCIAL GROUPS

If the objective of social justice had to be realised along with the process of development, then restructuring of society was an imperative. By social restructuring he meant removal of hindrances to the process of technical progress and various other basic reforms in the socio-economic scene of a country. He did not advocate wholesale state ownership of the means of production.

He emphatically argued that the second crisis of the capitalism experienced in the seventies, has been responsible for the collapse of the multilateral institutions and the policies and objectives which they cherished. To him, "It is a crisis of the system and also a crisis of ideas which have lagged behind the course of events."

SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

Raul Prebisch, while advocating programmed industrialisation in the framework of protection policies, was conscious of the need for optimum utilisation of the resources in the peripherial countries. The emergence of Latian American Free Trade Association (LAFTA), Central American Common Market (CACM) in the early sixties was a clear reflection of the impact of Prebisch's ideas. He was a keen observer of the process of economic integration in the Latin American region.

Prebisch put forth a policy alternative that the non-industrialised countries should utilise their export gains for developing industries in an accelerated manner.

PREBISCH HYPOTHESIS CRITICISED

According to Prof. P.R. Brahmananda, the most serious criticism of the Prebisch hypothesis arises from two standpoints viz., endogenous and exogenous. The former is relevant for countries like India, China, Pakistan, etc., as their trade is a small component of GDP, and priority has to be towards agricultural/wage goods development with a view to overcoming poverty and unemployment. The thesis of industrialisation as the priority does not get supported.

The latter (exogenous) or international standpoint is that inflation among the developing countries in the post-war period was largely due to the adoption of the gold exchange or rather dollar standard, in place of the pure gold standard. The world-wide inflation was largely a con-

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NEHRU : AN ASSESSMENT by SOVIET GDR & CZECH SCHOLARS

Orest Martyshino : JAWAHARLAL NEHRU AND HIS POLITICAL VIEWS *Progress Publishers, Moscow. pp. 375*
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: REMINISCENCES AND STUDIES. *The Institute of Oriental Studies, Moscow, through Sterling Publishers, New Delhi. pp 222. Rs. 150*

Comments by Tejwant S. Singh

AN ELABORATE STUDY

As an elaborate study of the political views of Jawaharlal Nehru, the first book has a single author, a prominent Indologist from the Soviet Union. The second book is a compilation of articles from 20 contributors – 15 from the Soviet Union, two from GDR and three from Czechoslovakia.Besides the ideological assumptions of the authors. which are relatively unvaried, the studies of Nehru which these two books forward, are marked by their varied cultural orientations. In this double significance lies the importance, albeit the value of these books.

NEHRU'S POLITICAL VIEWS
SOVIET PERCEPTIONS

The first book describes in all its varying phases the origin and growth of Nehru's political views. It also traces the reception and effect they came to register in the world in general and the Soviet Union in particular. Aware of the attitude the Soviet polity came to adopt towards Nehru in the course of time, this study of an academic sort, goes beyond that in extent and no less so in depth.

To begin with, the attitude of the Soviet polity towards Nehru was originally a bit negative. It took him as a nationalist leader who, for all his fight against a colonial power, was disposed towards neo-colonialism if, not colonialism.

After the death of Stalin, this attitude turned positive and original, so as to visualise him working for a just system in his own country and whishing for the same in other countries of the Third World. The trajectory of this attitude had a lot to do with the deepening perception that Nehru came to form about the Soviet Union in return.

LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT

In the twenties, Nehru went to the Soviet Union and in his youthfulness, became an ardent admirer of the socialist system being established there. On his return, he wrote eloquently about the historic moves undertaken in that vast country in the fields of electrification, industrialisation and collectivisation. His admiration of the Soviet people was total, for their sacrifice of the present to build a future of which they felt themselves as proud and privileged masters. No less resounding was his admiration of the Soviet leaders : Lenin for his originality of thought and intellectual audacity; Trotsky for his grand charisma and inspiring oratory; and Stalin for his unflinching persistence and grim determination.

From his articles published under the title "The Soviet Union", it seems that Nehru's perception did not altogether exclude the privations, disproportions and dislocations the Soviet people had to undergo even at that historical juncture. So peripheral is their mention, however, that it seems improbable, if not impossible, to visualise from that the dilemmas which the present Soviet polity seeks to overcome now, after seven decades through *perestroika* and *glasnost* in inefficacious and no less unveritable ways.

POST-WAR PERIOD

After becoming Prime Minister of India, Nehru felt that changes in the Soviet Union were not only desirable but inevitable also. What he did not figure in his retrospective imagination was that these changes would tend to restore market economy and capitalist system. Though, in his own country, he was intent upon creating a balance between the public and the private sectors, participatory democracy the like of which Raymond Williams, for example, was at pains to elaborate as something beyond the capitalist and the socialist system, did not enter into his prospective imagination.

TOWARDS CO-EXISTENCE

Nehru's later realisation, constrained in terms of retrospective and prospective imagination, convinced him of the need for mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence between the socialist system of the authoritarian sort in the Soviet Union and the socialist pattern of the democratic sort in India. His advocacy of that drew full support from the Soviet polity, particularly after the death of Stalin whose subsequent demonology swept away his earlier hagiology.

From ardent advocacy to peaceful coexistence with the Sovet Union is the trajectory that Nehru's perception covered from the twenties to the fifties. It corresponds in reverse with the trajectory that, from the fifties to the eighties the attitude of the Soviet polity of Nehru has covered from denigration to appreciation with peripheral figuring of aprtisan interests. This appreciation in all its extension and depth is to be found in this book by a Soviet scholar regarded as an authority in the field of Indology in his country.

POLITICAL BIOGRAPHY AND PHILOSOPHY

A revised version of the author's monograph published a decade back, this book comprises two parts in which diachronic and synchronic modes of study are employed in a complementary way. The three chapters of the first part present the origin of Nehru's political views in the era prior to Independence and after. Alongwith are presented features confirming their growth into a political philosophy.

While tracing the political biography and the ideological evolution of Nehru, the author focuses on several factors – namely education, practical struggle, affiliation with Gandhi, disaffiliation from the conservatives and no less so from the radicals like Subhas Chandra Bose and M.N. Roy, association with antifascist intellectuals of Europe and anti-pathy for communalists (neo-fascists of the native sort). Impelled to adopt socialist ideology as the crux of his political views, Nehru could not objure the cultural complexity animating the Indian life.

Responsive to all the diversity of conflicting influences, Nehru tended to cultivate a torn personality. He was disposed to adopt complexity not only as an experiential but

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also as an epistomological category. No wonder, for the author, Nehru's "vacillations, inconsistency and contradictions" seem to reflect "the turbulent epoch of conflicts, anxieties and hopes that India and many other countries were going through" during the historical era.

However, the author does not proceed to draw two further significative conclusions. First, that Nehru's political philosophy articulated itself through the present and future tense of imagination, making emergent elements more important than the residual ones. Second, equivocation and ambivalence so marked his political philosophy as to complicate rather than resolve problems through innovations so ardently advocated by him in the diverse fields of life.

NEHRU'S DISPOSITION TO RECONCILE CONTRADICTIONS

The second part of the book comprises six chapters in which Nehru's disposition to reconcile rather than resolve contradictions is elaborated in the fields of economy, politics, philosophy and international relations. Detail is in this regard, the essential forte of the author. In the course of disseminating this detail, the author invokes categories as are concrete enough. Abstract categories get circumvented in the process. As a result, the detail is informative rather than enlightening, on account of which its reception does not so much exclude as preclude its effect.

In this respect, this study accords with that overwhelming quantum of scholarship which is in conformity with the ideological predilections of the Soviet polity. From the conforming nature of this study flow two flaws, respectiveiy of the methodological and the ideological sort. Its methodology is repetitive as a result of which categories get divested of their specificity. Their typology gets diluted making them difficult to retain their efficacy and veracity.

HIS SUCCESSORS OR ADVERSARIES

The ideological flaw, correlative with the methodological one, makes the author trace evolutionary curve from Nehru to Indira Gandhi and perhaps further to Rajiv Gandhi. It is a replica of the ideological flaw that as an invariant has characterised the Soviet polity.

Of course, Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi were biologically related to Nehru. They were his successors, so they went on heading the Indian polity. But the devastation they have caused to Nehru's political philosophy is so hazardous that, in fields with which the author deals in the second part of the book, it is more appropriate to learn them as Nehru's adversaries. The author is not impelled for this because the scholarship conforming with the ideological predilections of the Soviet polity compels him to withhold himself from intellectual innovation of the sort.

* * *

The Soviet contributors to "*Jawaharlal Nehru : Reminiscences and Studies*" are not as distinguished as the author of the first book. Several of them who, as engineers, agronomists and counsellors, stayed in India during the Nehru era, write of his interest in the Soviet Union, his fondness of nature, art and literature and his love for his countrymen. These are brief pieces occasioned by diplomatic adulation rather than genuine appreciation that seems to preclude them.

Erik Komarov's "Nehru's Views on History, Society and Politics" is a detailed study touching upon all subjects related with Nehru. Though at several places he gives evidence of the weaknesses so characteristic of the Soviet scholarship,he is discerning enough to draw attention to Nehru's wish to reconcile socialism with democracy and power with knowledge. **Peter Kutsobin's** "Indian Progressive National Leader", **Ivan Yegorov's** "Nehru on Socialist-Oriented Development", **Oleg Malyarov** on "Nehru on India's Social and Economic Development," **Leonid Mitrakhin** on "Nehru's Contribution to Indo- Soviet Relations" and **Tatyana Shaumyan's** "India's Foreign Policy: Its Basic Principles" observe the paradigmatic constraints of the Soviet scholarship. They add only to the volume of the book without in any way enhancing its excellence.

ANTI-FASCIST NEHRU

The really refreshing pieces in the book are by scholars from the GDR and Czechoslovakia. In his perceptive piece "Exposure of Fascism,"**Diethelm Weidemarm** underlines Nehru's passionate and profound aversion for the ideological menance that overtook the European life for at least two decades.He draws attention to Bose's obtuseness with the implication that no other Indian leader, not even M.N.Roy, was so poignantly aware of this. At the same time, he finds fault with Nehru's biographers, notwithstanding those from the Soviet Union, for ignoring the anti-fascist aspect of his thought.

PRAGUE & PRAYAG

The pieces reflecting profound perception and signigying poignant involvement in the real sense are by scholars from Czechoslovakia. **Jaroslav Holman's** "Rural Development in India" is rather desultory for adopting ideological predilections and methodological flaws so characteristic of the Soviet scholarship. Though reluctantly, even Rajiv Gandhi is regarded here as a worthy successor to Nehru.

Miloslav Krasa's Nehru and the "Prayag" of Europe and **Dagmar Markova's** "Nehru : A Man of Two Cultures" are pieces inculcating and disseminating lasting reception and effect. Krasa's piece comprises a nuanced description of Nehru's visit to Czechoslovakia in the twenties, his stay there in the thirties, a revisit in the fifties, his impression of different regions and places and his contacts with scholars, particularly with **Vincence Lesny**, the most outstanding Indologist of that country. Phonetically sounding similar, Prague evoked childhood memories of Nehru's own birthplace. More than that, it was what, later on, he came to call the great sadness of the people that drew him to Czechoslovakia with the intensity next to that he experienced for Spain.

HIS CULTURAL ORIENTATIONS

To call Markova's piece moving and perceptive is perhaps an understatement. It is a very profound study of Nehru's cultural orientation, of which reconciliation of the contraries is in fact the raison d'etre. At every level, personal, domestic, political, religious and even linguistic, Nehru was after this sort of reconciliation. As a result, his cultural orientation was such as opened him to the residual elements to life at the same time that it made him critical of them.

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HOPEFUL CONCERN FOR HUMANITY

Rajni Kothari : STATE AGAINST DEMORACY IN SEARCH OF HUMANE GOVERNANCE
Ajanta Publications, New Delhi (1988) pp. 308. Rs. 200/-

Comments by A.B. Mathur

Anthologies do not lend themselves easily to a systematic analysis because of disparateness and the absence of a central unified theme. Essays written for the daily newspapers or the learned journals on diverse topics and brought together between two hard covers do not develop intellectual cohesivencess and thematic unity. The insularity of each essay in spite of the title of the book *State Against Democracy* and sub-titles given to each of the three sections sticks out like a sore thumb. The title is suggestive of a profound and off-beat subject, but is scarcely related to the topics discussed in the different essays, except in a vague and general way. The sub-title "In Search of Humane Governance" is, likewise, not related to or is an inference from and complementary to the main title. Instead of a preface, there is "A Word of Gratitude", a catalogue of acknowledgements, followed by a very long and tedious 'introduction', in which the author attempts to encapsulate and summarise the ideas discussed in different essays.

ONE MAN, SEVERAL ROLES

Rajni Kothari is not one man, but a procession of men, and roles. A social scientist who has been studying developing societies for decades, a teacher who taught in India and abroad but perhaps found the work not too appetising, a journalist who has written for the daily newspapers on subjects of topical interest and thereby established a reputation for being a writer of uncommon brilliance and grasp of Indian politics, an author who has written and edited books which are read by students of Indian politics and government, not so much for illumination as for familiarising themselves with the maxims distilled from the scholarly surveys made of the Indian political scene, a political activist who has espoused many important causes and opposed with courage and conviction the excesses perpetrated during the emergency, a counsellor of sorts of various bodies like the PUCL and Lokayan, editor of a highbrowish journal *Alternatives* for a decade or so, and a member of the Planning Commission, perhaps a job hardly suited to his abilities and temper, under the ill-fated V.P. Singh government.

AN OPTIMIST CONCERNED WITH HUMANKIND

He is not a establishment man and being a gadfly, only prospers in the opposition. In spite of the fact that he is a very prescient social scientist and knows the way violence, malevolence, terrorism and lawlessness and forces of authoritarianism on the one hand and of social and political anarchy on the other are operating, there is a profound sense of optimism running through the work. The happenings in India and abroad which could make any man despair of the future of democracy leave Rajni Kothari still filled with hope of a bright future.

He casts his net wide and though most of the essays are devoted to "State" in India and the state of Indian democracy, whole humanity, the universe, is his concern, because after all what is happening in India and elsewhere in the domain of politics, economics and culture is a theme worthy of engaging world's attention. It is not merely a national problem, a crisis in various types of state and patterns of democracy; it is truly a human predicament.

ON DEMOCRACY AND STATE TWO SETS & PHASES OF WRITING

The book comprises two sets of writings, done in two different phases. The first set of writings was done during the 'intellectual and activist phase' marked by a search for new theoretical insights and understandings into the human predicament'; the second comprises writings on Democracy and State, done earlier and is marked by an incisive and indepth analysis of the State in its different incarnations at different phases of its historical development.

State has been analysed and interpreted by almost every political thinker both as theory and in practice, as a politico-juridical reality and as myth. Rajni Kothari's analysis of the State as it is emerging in the developing countries is founded on a mosaic of sociological, political, economic and cultural perceptions. His analysis of State emerging in India in the midst of social and political chaos and a variety of challenges is meaningful and relevant. However Kothari's perceptions of Democracy are neither clear nor convincing, but that is not his fault, nor is it a shortcoming.

The pattern of democracy that is emerging under the shadow of galloping lawlessness, secessionist and disruptive forces and the fast-changing value patterns, emergence of sub-nationalism, absence of a dynamic, convincing patriotic leadership is apt to leave every author gasping for breath and befuddled. Rajni Kothari, however, discusses democracy in relation to growing authoritarianism and the half-baked, half-hearted, slipshod efforts to decentralise power both at the centre and the states with all the ingenuity and knowledge of an experienced writer.

CENTERALISED STATE A MONSTER

Rajni Kothari is deeply concerned about the emergence of the modern centralised state in India, in the nature societies of the West, but particularly in the Third World. The centralising tendencies of corporate capitalism and the militarist doctrine of security are turning the state into a really monstrous organisation. In the lengthening shadow of such a monster, unscrupulous politicians and power-hungry political leaders have a free run of the entire paraphernalia of the state and their insatiable appetite for power increases with every accretion to the authority of the State. No amount of tinkering and pottering with schemes of decentralization, however well-conceived and well-meaning, can alter the hard and overpowering reality that an uncontrollably powerful state can never be a guarantee of freedom, and instead of safeguarding democracy, imperils it. In spite of the frightful political scenario that is emerging and the evidence of state repression, social violence, institutional decay and erosion of democratic norms that is piling up, Rajni Kothari's faith in democracy, in humanity, is not shaken.

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HOPE IS NOT LOST

He is a visionary and a realist at the same time, and in spite of the dark clouds gathering all over, he does not give up his search for a silver lining. His faith in the immeasurable human potentialities and his hope of a society of compassionate men caring for each other and waging an unceasing struggle to retrieve the lost moral values are both strong and eduring. He hopes that with the emergence of a mostrous state, the weakening of democratic forces and dissipation of moral values, all is not lost. So long as men care for freedom and human dignity, and so long as they struggle to build a better society, nothing is lost.

Rajani Kothari's *State Against Democracy* is a mature and scholarly work of an outstanding social scientist. It is not surely everybody's cup of tea. It is a work to be enjoyed and admired by those who have read history, sociology, economic and political theory and who have taken pains to develop right perceptions about the Indian political reality. For a thoughtful student of social sciences, this book is indispensable.

A former Director of College Education, Rajasthan, Dr. A.B.Mathur is Chief Editor, Administrative Change and visiting Professor of Political Science, Jodhpur University and University of Rajasthan.

[Comments by Prof. Darshan Singh Maini (Chandigarh) on this book were published earlier in the Indian Book Chronicle October 1989 (vol. XIV No. 10)-Ed.]

DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS IN THE THIRD WORLD

(Continued from page 5)

sequence of the U.S. monetary and fiscal policies which created large dollar and growing dollar liabilities accepted as foreign exchange by other countries.

CHANGE FROM WITHIN

The writings of Raul Perbisch on Latin America and its economic problems are abundant.

He also dealt with the global crisis of capitalism. He noted that the lessons of this crisis are highly important. They must be conned with dispassionate objectivity. "We must set out anew on the path of our intellectual autonomy; and always bear in mind that the centres have shown interest in the development of the periphery only when it suited their own economic, political or strategic interest. They have never been concerned with the underlying social depths of peripheral development."

Prebisch, therefore, wanted that change should come from within the developing countries compatible with new forms of international cooperation and coexistence.

An eminent economist, Dr. Navin Chandra Joshi teaches in Motilal Nehru College of Delhi University.

NEHRU : AN ASSESSMENT

... (Continued from page 7)

This leads Markova to the central observation of the piece that Nehru viewed everything – mythology, tradition, religion or even language – from the angle of an Indologist rather than an Indian, a scholar rather than a believer. This was the position of a loving onlooker, allowing him "in the course of time to arrive at a realistic compreshesion of India's problems and to clearly visualise his country in a most remarkable way". This is an observation one will hardly wish to dispute. What one will wish and that too ardently, is only its further elaboration.

Dr. Tejwant S. Gill is Professor of English in Gurn Nanak Dev University, Amritsar.

[This piece was frist published in The Tribune, Chandigarh, or 9th november, 1990. - Ed.]

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AN ARCHITECT OF MODERN INDIA

Rajmohan Gandhi: PATEL— A Life
Navjiwan Publishing House, Ahemadabad, (1991), pp.613, Rs. 200

Review by Amrik Singh

While Gandhi and Nehru have been written about extensively, Vallabhbhai Patel has been by and large ignored. Rajmohan Gandhi's biography is an attempt to fill in the gap. By any standards of reckoning, it is an outstanding success. It presents the whole man in full and intimate detail and with a degree of urbanity and even-handedness which is truly impressive.

Apart from his correspondence and various other documents which were published quite some years ago and have been made use of by several writers, Rajmohan has used Manibehn Patel's diary extensively. She was very close to her father and was privy to several things that could not have been known to outsiders. What her diary reveals is nothing new or startling though, for Patel's life was a public book. Its great merit lies in confirming certain perceptions and views from that intimate angle which only a person as close as Manibehn could have had.

What emerges at the end of the 533 densely-written pages is a warm and compelling portrait of a man who, without question, had a touch of grandeur about him and who has been justly described as the architect of modern India.

Peasant's son "Foreign" — Bound

The first half of the book describes Patel's early life and career. There are some interesting incidents which foreshadow a man destined to play crucial role in Congress politics for more than a quarter century. Being the son of a peasant, it took some doing to adjust to city ways. Going by the trend of the time, he knew that if he had to make any impact in social terms, he had to out-distance others.

One of the things he decided quite early in his career as a pleader was that he must go abroad and qualify as a barrister. As he wrote at one point, "I longed to go overseas to see the people of England who, living 7000 miles away, were able to rule over us so long".

It should be clear from this remark that, after more than a century of British rule in India, more and more young people were convinced that, if they had to progress, they had to ape the British, so to speak. The British conquest of India, as everyone reconginsed, was not only a military conquest, it was also a cultural conquest.

It is some such trend of thought which is illustrated by the fact that when, a few years later, Patel went to London for his higher education, he left his two children with Miss Wilson of Queen Mary's School in Bombay. It was competence in English and the English ways which was supposed to unlock the gates of progress. In 1915, when he was around 40, he observed, "The sommum bonum of life lay in imitating the foreigner in speech, in dress and any other thing that mattered."

Gandhi's Footsteps

It was this very cast of thinking that had taken Gandhi to England; and, at the end of the 19th century, when he came back, he was fully Anglicised, though his mind, properly speaking, was anti-colonial. There were certain things in that country which had jarred on his nerves. What crystalised his inchoate feelings, however, was the chance factor that he went to South Africa on a legal assignment and spent a number of years there and encountered blatant racial discrimination.

When he came back to India, Gandhi was more of an Indian than anyone else around him. Most other Indians were in the process of aping the British. Gandhi had gone beyond that. He had aped them and then rejected them.

To cut a long story short, Patel completed his legal education in record time, topped in his examinations and came back, much earlier than most others did, to resume his practice. Within a short time, he rose to the top in his profession.

Here Was A Man.....the Rise Of Gandhi

It is widely known that Patel ignored Gandhi when he first started making an impact on Ahmedabad. Patel was then at the height of his professional career. It was Gandhiji's role in the Champaran Satyagraha which attracted him first.

When Gandhi accepted the prosecution charge that he had defied the law and furthermore told the judge to give him the maximum punishment, Patel sat up and took notice of the new idiom that was being used. Here was a man who did not evade the punishment, nor was he defensive or apologetic. On the contrary, he conducted himself with great dignity and courage. Before long, the two drew close to each other; and the rest is history. What Rajmohan does is to provide many graphic details of these early years and depict the whole thing with a wealth of material.

This development coincided with the ascendancy of Gandhi in Indian politics. Apart from Patel, so many other people, each one of them outstanding in his own right, gravitated towards Gandhi. As has been noted by many a scholar, Tilak happened to die at that historical juncture so as to clear the way for Gandhi to take over.

Gandhi brought in his theory of non-violent *satyagraha* and won adherents like Rajgopalachari, Rajendra Parshad, Motilal Nehru, C.R. Das and several others. He also won over the Ali brothers for some time. It is not necessary to go into details, because those have been written at geat length elsewhere. What needs to be noted, and it has been noted by almost every one who has studied the national movement, that a whole new crop of leadership emerged into prominence and accepted Gandhi as their unquestioned leader. The Jallianwala Bagh tragedy was a turning point in a sense; and what happened in the 1920's and the 30's flowed from the developments around that period.

Gandhi-Patel-Nehru — The Triumvirate

Interesting as these details are, the core of the book lies in a detailed analysis of Patel's relationship with Gandhi and Nehru. The basic issue was put succinctly by C. Rajgopalachari a quarter century after India became independent. He said, "Undoubtedly it would have been better if Nehru had been asked to be Foreign Minister and Patel

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made the Prime Minister". This is a fairly widely held opinion and it is important to go into this issue. More than half the book deals with finding an answer to this issue and describes the triangular relationship of Gandhi, Nehru and Patel with considerable wealth of documentation.

Two Comrades

Within a few years of Gandhi and Patel becoming comrades, the latter initiated and conducted the Bardoli struggle and did it with such consumate ability and thoroughness that it became clear to anybody who had an eye to see that here was a man with exceptional organising talent. His becoming the "party boss" in later years was a logical development, if one may put it that way. It drew Gandhi and Patel together and cemented a relationship which continued for the rest of his life.

Gandhi's attitude towards Patel was one of profound respect and regard. He knew that here was a man the like of whom the Congress did not possess. Strong, silent but effective – these were the adjectives used for him. Not only that, the two depended upon each other. Being the supreme commander, so to speak, Gandhi knew how to assign a role to each one of his lieutenants. It is in this context that one has to look at how Gandhi dealt with Patel and Nehru.

An Errant And Truant Child

Quite early, long before Gandhi made a formal declaration of Nehru as his heir, his preference for the latter was unconcealed. According to Kriplani, "Gandhi like the good shepherd, left the many going straight and ran after the one going astray". In fact Gandhi believed that, "Sardar Patel would be with him in any case."

Another perceptive observer, K.G. Mushruwala said, "I would discribe the Gandhi-Patel relationship as that of brothers, Gandhi being the senior brother, Gandhi-Nehru as that of father and son." This relationship of father and son was underlined when in early 1928, Nehru wrote to Gandhi,"Am I not your child in politics, though perhaps ar errant and truant child?"

In 1929, when the Lahore Session took place under the presidentship of Nehru, the choice of the latter as President had been made by Gandhi without any one else proposing his name. A large number of people were in favour of Patel being made the President, but Gandhi preferred Nehru. Even Nehru was uncomfortable about the whole thing and said, "I have seldom felt so annoyed and humiliated. It was not that I was not sensible of the honour. But I did not come to it by the main entrance or even the side entrance. I appeared suddenly by a trap door and bewildered the audience into acceptance".

The fact of the matter is that it was somewhere in the early 20's that Gandhi had made up his mind in favour of Nehru. According to Rajmohan, what was decisive was the age factor. Gandhi was senior to Patel by seven years, but Nehru was younger than Patel by fourteen years. It is this factor, more than any other, which determined Gandhi's preference for Nehru. Patel also recognised this fact. He said it in so many words to Maulana Azad in 1950, "Yes, if I had been of Jawaharlal's age, I would have said I will run the government".

Rajmohan's comment in this regard puts the matter in a nutshell. "The younger brother's analogy is probably again the more suitable. Patel was the helpful, respectful, argumentative yet obedient, younger brother. His own self-respect and independent spirit frequently caused him to argue with Gandhi in a most forthright manner possible. However he always yielded in the end. Apart from loyalty-the vow to stick with Gandhi, "as long as I live and he lives" – Vallabhbhai had come to respect the Mahatma's instinct which could trigger events like the Salt March."

Details about the 1931 Movement, assumption of office by Congress ministries in several provinces, the ousting of K.F. Nariman in favour of B.G. Kher as the Premier of Bombay and similar details, though carefully considered, need not be referred to. These are well known; what Rajmohan does is to present things some-what more vividly than others do. It is the more momentus movement called the Quit India and what followed, which need to be dilated upon. But there is one thing which must be refererd to.

Gandhi's Heir

It was in January 1941 that Gandhi designated Nehru as his heir. He announced his nomination of Nehru as his successor with the words "Not Rajaji, not Sardar Vallabhbhai but Jawaharlal will be my successor. You cannot divide water by repeatedly striking it with a stick, it is just as difficult to divide us .... when I am gone, he will speak my language".

His Voice

Why did Gandhi take such a categorical stand? The generally held assumption is that Patel was perceived as anti-Muslim, whereas the same could not be said about Nehru. With the Muslim League slogan of Pakistan, it was important to have someone in that office who did not arouse antagonism.

In fact, as would be recalled, Maulana Azad continued to be the President for several years, because all the leaders where in jail from 1942 to 1945 and an election could not be held. In 1946, Patel could have been made the President. In fact, there was a demand to that effect by a fairly large section of Congressmen. But Gandhi explained his preference for Nehru in these words, "Jawaharlal cannot be replaced today whilst the charge is being taken over from Englishmen. He, a Harrow boy, a Cambridge graduate and a barrister, is wanted to carry on the negotiations with the Englishmen". Two other reasons that Gandhi advanced in addition to the one already mentioned – more acceptable to the Muslims--were that Jawaharlal would not take the second place. Secondly, Nehru was better known internationally and that was an asset.

Commenting on Nehru's unwillingness to take the second place, Rajmohan says, "Believing, like Gandhi, that Jawaharlal would either take number one spot in government or stay out, Vallabhbhai also reckoned that whereas office was likely to moderate Nehru, rejection would drive him into opposition. Patel shrank from precipitating such an outcome which would bitterly divide India."

The Quit India Movement

At this stage it needs to be recalled that the three years spent by the members of the Working Committee in Ah-

(Continued)

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mednagar Fort (1942- 45) were years of severe isolation, a good deal of self-analysis and some barely concealed antagonism towards one another.

Both Azad and Nehru had opposed Quit India Movement initially. Three years later, Nehru was critical of some of the mistakes made. Patel, however, defended what Gandhi had done. He said, "Any other course would have meant annihilation of the Congress". But he also added that the Quit India Movement had not been an unmixed blessing. His own words were, "If Congress was preserved by it, Jinnah had been strengthened". On the whole, according to Rajmohan, it can be said that Azad and Nehru were somewhat self- righteous, but Patel was clear in his mind that the decision had been "correct and inevitable"

Partition — Patel In Favour

In a sense it can also be said that these three years of incarceration enabled Patel to do a good deal of introspection. In regard to some of his earlier decisions, he had followed Gandhi more or less blindly. In the next few years he was to follow him, but not blindly. It can even be said that in certain matters, it was he who decided and Gandhi agreed with him. The partition of the sub-continent is a case in point. Patel decided in favour of it and Gandhi fell in line, even though most reluctantly.

To come to the crucial events preceding the partition, Rajmohan is of the view that his experience of discussions connected with the Cabinet Mission Plan and the working of the Interim Government convinced Patel that if the transfer of power had to take place, some price would have to be paid for it. In plain words, it meant the partition of the country. Attlee's announcement on February 20, 1947, that Britain would withdraw by June 1948 seemed to have transformed the situation. In a sense, the timetable had been laid down. What required to be done was to work out the details; the partition of the sub-continent was one of them.

Opinions about the need or the desirability of the partition would continue to be expressed, and there is no finality about these things. What requires to be noted, however, is the role played by V.P. Menon in converting Patel to the need for accepting the partition. According to Rajmohan, Manibehn's diary mentions that Menon called on Patel on December 25 and 28, 1946 and again successively on January 3,4 and 5. Rajmohan's conclusion is that Patel's conversion to this idea took place on the Christmas Day. According to VP Menon, "he dictated the outline of a plan" in the Sardar's presence.

Was V.P. Menon acting on his own or on behalf of somebody? Nobody would ever know. This much seems to be definite however, that his role in coming to this decision was crucial, if not central. Yet another person who probably played an important role behind the scenes in regard to Patel making up his mind in favour of partition was G.D. Birla. Rajmohan is of the view that he too was consulted by Patel.

There was another dimension of the problem also. The Princely States depended upon the British for support and sustenance. Patel felt that as soon as the British withdrew, the Indian States would be left with no prop. They controlled about two- fifths of the country. That being so, the issue had to be viewed not only in terms of the immediate payoff, but also the long-range outcome. His subsequent integration of these States with the Indian Union vindicated his stand, it must be acknowledged.

The Troubled Days Of 1947

There was considerably unanimity of approach between Nehru and Patel during those troubled months of 1947. Gandhi was persuaded by Patel to agree to the partition. He agreed finally; but in his heart, he was most unhappy about it. That is one reason why he absented himself from Delhi when the transfer of power took place. In any case, what had been happening in eastern India during those days was compelling enough to demand his presence there.

Soon after the transfer of power, differences of approach and perception between Nehru and Patel came into the open. These have been written about extensively, but what is of crucial significance is the last meeting between Patel and Gandhi an hour or so before the latter was assassinated. To what extent Patel was emotionally attached to Gandhi should be evident from one comment made by Rajmohan. According to him, there was "mutual equality" between Patel and Jawaharlal that Gandhi's presence ensured. His going removed the equality and made Nehru the Sardar's chief.

Differences But No Breach

There were numerous occasions when Patel asserted himself and even outmanoeuvred Nehru. Tandon's election as the Congress President was one example, and R.A. Kidwai's exclusion from the Congress Working Committee in consequence was another. But whatever Patel did, he never carried his difference that far as to cause a breach. For instance, he did not agree with the decisions on Kashmir or Tibet. He differed, but he never carried it to the breaking point. Patel is quoted as having said to C.R. Rajagopalachari in October 1950, "Till Bapu's death, I used to oppose him (Nehru) but now I have given it up." This was only a few months before his own death, and can be legitimately taken as his final testament.

Much more telling is another incident. The day he was leaving for Bombay on his last journey, Patel said to N.V. Gadgil, "I am not going to live. Make me a promise". When Gadgil said yes, the Sardar took his friend's hand in his and continued, "Whatever your differences with Panditji, do not leave". It would be difficult to think of another example of subordinating himself to the interests of the country.

Blunt And Decisive

The book is full of anecdotes like this one. It is not possible to refer to many others in a book review. But a few examples of his bluntness as well as decisiveness may be quoted, so as to provide a flavour of the kind of man that he was.

Soon after he took over as Home Minister, the Chief of Intelligence, who had to report to him, once suggested that things could improve were the Congress to be generous to the Muslim League. He suggested, for instance, that against six seats for itself in the Cabinet, the League could be given seven seats. Patel's reply was crushing "If you think

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generosity will placate the Muslim Oliver Twist, then you do not understand either the Muslims or the situation".

Yet another incident which illustrates his outlook occured on May 30, 1947. Mountabatten sent VP Menon to Patel to seek the latter's agreement to a "joint control of Calcutta" for six months. Jinnah wanted this. Mountabatten was inclined to support him. Patel's reply was, "Not even for six hours".

What illuminates the man even more decisively is what he said when the Hyderabad problem was sought to be soft-pedalled. The Defence Chiefs, who were still British at that time, were not in favour of police action. Patel summed up the situation in these words,

"It is not, in the final analysis, the action of the Army which maintains law and order--look at the Punjab last August, when 55,000 men could not stop the massacre. It is rather the prestige of the Government backed by political armed action which keeps the people in order. At the moment the prestige of the Government is sufficiently high to take action against Hyderabad and maintain order elsewhere at the same time. But if the Government delays action against Hyderabad much longer, then the prestige will fall so greatly that no amount of troops would be sufficient for internal security."

Was Patel Anti-Muslim?

These separate incidents raise an important issue. Was Patel anti-Muslim or not? The general perception is that he was anti-muslim and there is enough evidence in the book to suggest something of this kind. But Rajmohan's own evaluation is that while Patel was consciously pro-Hindu, he was fair in his dealings with the Muslims. The author also quotes some evidence to this effect. Since there is evidence on both sides and it is possible to manipulate evidence, some people might accuse Rajmohan of having done so.

My own feeling about this particular issue, as about the whole book, is that Rajmohan has tried to be fair and even-handed. If someone is unsympathetic to the writer, he can accuse him of having done the job of an official historian. Also, since it is the Sardar Patel Memorial Society which sponsored the study, anyone can turn around and charge him of this kind of bias. But that would be stretching the point.

A Fair Portrait of A Complex Personality

Rajmohan presents Patel in all his complexity and contradictions. In doing so, he holds the scales even, which is much more than can be said of most biographers.

Rajmohan quotes Morarji Desai to say that he paid out of his salary for phone calls made to PCC chiefs. Even Congress funds were not debited. According to Morarji, it was Manibehn who kept these accounts. There is no reason to dispute what Morarji Dasai has said. Given the kind of ethos that prevailed in those days and given the kind of non-nonsense man that Patel was, this is more likely that not.

In his dealings with his son, as also with his grandson, Patel gave evidence of an extraordinary degree of caution and did not permit private matters to be mixed up with official obligations. His son, Dayabhai, lost in a deal with a Muslim in regard to exchange of property because of his migration to Karachi. The deal had been made some years before Pakistan was established, it must be added in fairness. Patel, however, took a firm line and did not relent. He similarly told Dayabhai's son in 1948, when he was recovering from a heart attack, two things. He said, "As long I am in this chair, do not visit Delhi unless I am unwell and you have to visit Delhi". (At that time he was a student in the U.S. and was visiting his grandfather.) The second piece of advice was, "All sorts of people will contanct you. Take care."

This is most admirable and in total contrast to what happens today. But there is another incident also to which Rajmohan has not made a reference. On a personal enquiry, he told the reviewer that he had not come across a reference to it anywhere.

Soon after Liaqat Ali took over Finance in the Interim Government, he raised an issue about the furnishing of Patel's official residence. In the bargain, he tried to ridicule the commitment of Congressmen to plain living and high thinking. This stung Patel and he reimbursed the excess government expenditure. It was also stated then that the amount had been paid by G.D. Birla. Two questions. What are the details of this incident? A search of the newspapers of late 1947 requires to be made. Secondly, what kind of light does this incident throw on the relationship between them ?

Prof. Amrik Singh, founder - editor of this journal, has found time from his writings on education matters and other articles to review this book for IBC. Another review by him would be published soon.

Hall of fame New Inductees

Mr. Narendra Kumar, Managing Director of Vikas Publishing House, Mr. Khushwant Singh, the well-known journalist and writer, and Mr. Shanti Lal Jain, founder of Motilal Banarsidass, have been selected for induction into the Indian Publishing Hall of Fame. Two others- P.S. Jayasinghe (Asia Publishing House) and Sitaldas Primlani (Oxford Book Co.)- are to be inducted posthumously. The selection was made by a Selection Board, chaired by Dr. L.M. Singhvi, the wellknown jurist, India's new High Commissinor in U.K.

The Hall of Fame was founded by Mr. O.P. Ghai, Chairman, Institute of Book Publishing, in 1987 to accord recognition to individuals and institutions who have contributed to the promotion of publishing and book culture in India.

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ABC OF DISTRICT PLANNING

OLD STUFF IN A NEW FORM

R.P. Mishra (ed.) : DISTRICT PLANNING - A HAND-BOOK *Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi, 1990, pp. xii + 331, Rs. 300*

Comments by Rakesh Hooja

This book proclaims that it "has been brought out on the 60th birthday of Dr. K.V. Sundaram as a tribute to his contributions to the theory and practice of District Planning." Considering Dr. Sundaram's long innings at the Planning Commission and the Central Town and Country Planning Organization and now with F.A.O., involved in work related to spatial and regional planning, as well as district planning culminating in his work as Member-Convenor of the Planning Commission's Working Group on District Planning which produced the Hanumantha Rao Report, besides his academic output, including many collaborative efforts with the editor of the book under review (himself known for his continued interest in district and decetralized planning), one expected this to be a major new work on the subject. The subtitle reinforced this belief, since the dictionary defines a handbook as a guidebook; and, therefore, on seeing the volume at the National Book Fair at Jaipur in December, 1990, one was quick to purchase it.

ASSEBLAGE OF OLD REPORTS & DOCUMENTS

Only later did one realize that about one third of the book (nine out of twenty chapters and 137 pages) was taken up by the summary of a district plan on Chitradurga district of Karnataka State prepared by the editor fifteen years ago – a job displaying adequate skills, but still not perhaps what any expert, or even the editor himself would prepare today. And its last chapter, specially mentioned in the preface as "giving a model of development administration at the district level" also does not cater to all the politico administrative innovations in the field, which have occurred in actual fact since 1976.

Other old documents reproduced in this book include a piece written (interesting, because it, written more than fifty years ago) by M. Visvesvaraya giving suggestions about a set-up for district organization, though one wonders whether it has more than curiosity value today. Then there is an extract from the Planning Commission's cuidelines on District Planning (1969) which have already got wide exposure among interested Indians, not only as part of the 1969 Document, but also because they have been reproduced in the second volume of the Hanumantha Report widely read in Government and outside, since the Planning Commission issued it in 1985.

The FAO Economic and Social Development Paper 52 of the same year entitled *Toward Improved Multi-level Planning for Agricultural and Rural Development in Asia and the Pacific* (for which Dr. Sundaram was chiefly responsible) has also provided an extract on decentralization of management and administration for the book under review. This reviewer has already commented on the similarities of parts of the Hanumantha Rao Report and FAO Paper 52 in his 1986 book *District Planning--Concept, Setting and State Level Applications* and also acknowledged their importance. But if extracts from previously published reports were to be included then equally, if not more useful, would have been the inclusion of a summary of the Hanumantha Rao Report recommendations.

Two pieces by Dr. Sundaram have been included – one on Panchayati Raj and TALMIX (Technocratic, Academic and Democratic Mix) reprinted from the *Economic Times, June 9-10, 1988,* and the other on the types of integration (including sectoral-spatial integration) and the problems of sectoral mixing in area development planning.

STATE & DISTRICT SECTORS - EXAMPLES OF U.P., KARNATAK & TAMIL NADU

There is an article by Ajit Kumar Singh discussing formulas for dividing budgetary resources between the State and District sectors, and for determining each districts share being followed by various States, examined from the point of view of Uttar Pradesh. Another piece by Arun Sinha describes very briefly the planning process in India, and borrowing from the Hanumantha Rao Report, it sets forth the stages of district planning and continues the story to some recent developments.

Palaniduri's contribution is a very interesting piece comparing a state (Karnataka) where district planning has done well by all reports, with another (Tamilnadu) where it has been a non- starter. The main difference appears to have been the question of political will.

NEW PRESENTATION OF OLD MATERIAL

However, Palanidurai takes the story only up to the end of December,1988 and rear looking at the references mentioned in a paper by C.H. Hanumantha Rao presented at the "National Seminar on Nation Building, Development Process and Communication: In Search of India's Renaissance" at New Delhi December 3-7, 1988 makes one suspect that this paper was originally a mimeographed paper of the Institute of Economic Growth written in 1988 (which was being talked about favourably in Delhi in 1989-90) and which this reviewer had also tried to obtain for his co-edited volume District and Decentralized Planning (1991), but failed to do so, because he could not obtain Palanidurai's address. There is no harm in picking up a good unpublished paper for including in an edited volume, but then surely acknowledgements are called for.

The reason why one suspects that this paper is the (unacknowledged) Institute of Economic Growth mimeographed paper is the fact that G.V. Visvanath's four-page note starts off by stating that it is a paper being presented to a conference, while nowhere does the editor indicate in the book under review that the piece was originally presented at a conference. Even R.P. Mishra's 'Introduction' to this book turns out to be identical, word for word, with a paper "On the Task of District Planning" presented by Dr. Mishra at the Expert Group Meeting on Decentralized Planning held at the National Academy of Administration, Musoorie from 11th to 13th June,1990 and

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DISTRICT PLANNING

reprinted in the seminar proceedings *Readings in Decentalized Planning (1991)* edited by B.N. Tugandhar and Amitava Mukherjee. Perhaps Dr. Mishra's paper on Spatial Planning discussing the conflict between distance and population criteria for such planning and the problems of fixing the hierarchies of services and activities was specially written for this book.

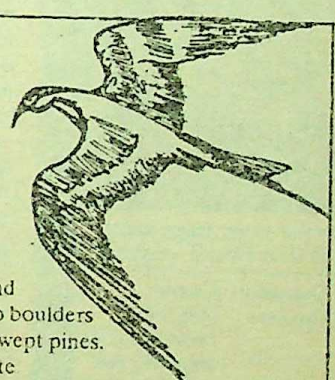
Dr. Mishra would surely have found many experts willing to write special papers for a volume honouring Dr. Sundaram, and certainly Dr. Sundaram deserved more than the present volume in its present form, though that is not to say that the book may not prove a useful introductory volume for students and academics. Alternatively, the editor could have stuck to previously pulished papers and documents, but then he should have included all the significant contributions in the field so as to make the book a definitive reader.

A bibliography on the subject would also have been very welcome. At present one has to be content with a list of some of Dr. Sundaram's writings.

Before ending, one may add that the map on the cover jacket of the book gives the impression that Agro-climatic Regional Planning (ACRP) started by the Planning Commission in 1988 would also be discussed in the book, but this is not so.

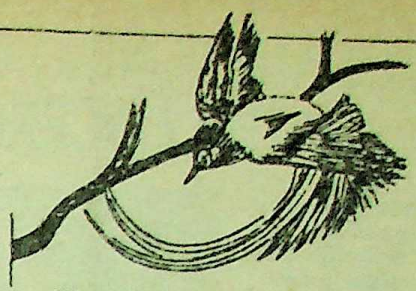
Mr. Rakesh Hooja is Commissioner, Command Area Development, Indira Gandhi Canal Project Area, Bikaner, also holding temperoty charge of Vice-Chancellor, Rajasthan Agriculture University, Bikaner.

SINGING WITH THE BIRDS ...



A River Tern on the Ganga

The river tern skims over the bend
where Ganga says her goodbye to boulders
leaving behind the sighs of windswept pines.
The tern loses her flying silhouette
in the floating blisters of progress.
The troubled glide of the tern
on the insectless surface
silences the petition
of the gasping fish.
In the plains the holy
and the profane meet
on the bank of sandy bulges of sin.
The groans of the dying river
wreathe the creaseless waves.
The holy river yet carries
its weight of memories
of trouts and mahseers.
The sullen sea cannot now push
the river back to the mountains
with a slap of its angry tide



The Paradise Flycatcher

With two feet of sunrays
pendant from his tail
this bird radiates the spring.
He turns the branch into a flute
with a kiss of his tail ribbons
and makes it sing
to the tune of whirring flies.
Then darting at a moth
he intercepts the insect's journey
with a lash of his streamers.
With the fly pilloried on the branch
this embroidered fairy moves on
like a splash of feathery satin.

Knock on Wood

The woodpecker knocks and she knows
that home's insect winner is back
after a day's flirting with songs and stories.
Doing a waltz round the tree trunks
with the breeze for strings
and his beak for percussion
he flies back home
in the swollen urgency of desire.
She does not have to look
through the eye of the door.
In dots and strokes
he has announced his arrival.
The prelude to homecoming
the notation of desire
is writ large on the scorebook
of the old tree's bark.

Three Poems by Man Mohan Singh
These are extracts from *Bird Poems*
by Man Mohan Singh
Published by Seagull Books. Price : Rs. 80.00, 1989
Illustrations by Janet Sten house

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NUCLEAR POWER AND YOU — VIII

DECOMMISSIONING OF NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS WITH CONCERN FOR PUBLIC SAFETY.

In every industry, permanent retiring of an operating plant, after its service life, is inevitable. This is called decommissioning. In case of nuclear power plants, because of radioactive elements present, guidelines and procedures for decommissioning are stipulated, much in advance of actual implementation. Resulting in national and international criteria for radiation protection, transport and waste disposal and environmental safety during various stages of decommissioning.

At the end of its operating life (30 to 40 years), a nuclear power plant contains some radioactive structures and worn out equipment. However, a major portion (over 85%) of the plant never becomes radioactive and can be demolished or reused without restriction. In the remaining 15%, after the spent fuel (containing 99% of the radioactivity) is taken out of the reactor and shifted off-site for disposal, only the reactor vessel and piping are of main concern; because of induced radioactivity, caused by neutron irradiation of structural metals, with their specific half-lives for radioactive decay. And secondly, because of the deposition of corrosion products on equipment surfaces, which can be decontaminated by chemical and mechanical processes.

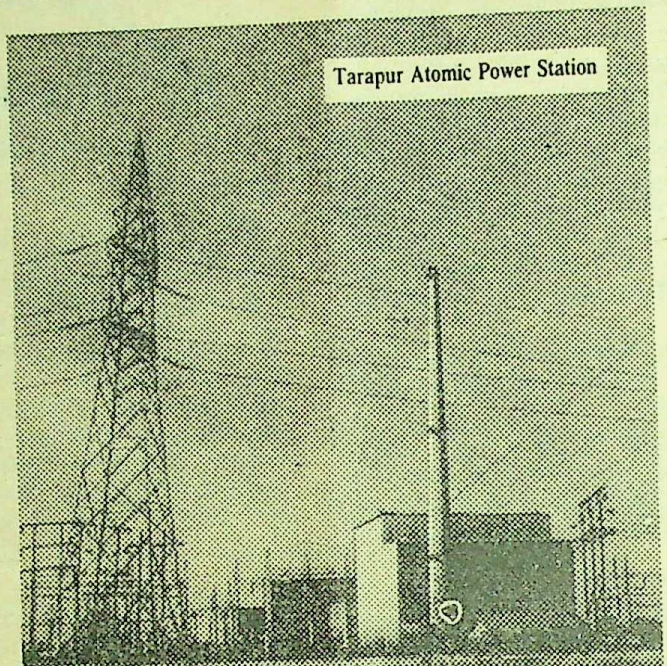
Three stages of decommissioning nuclear power plants.

1. Storage with surveillance : This involves removal of all irradiated fuel, fuel coolant and other easily accessible radioactive material, leaving reactor vessel, structures and ventilation system intact, inside the containment building, under surveillance and control. This takes about two years.

2. Restricted site release : The radioactive reactor vessel and components are sealed off (entombed) for a dormant period of about 30 years for radioactivity to decay. Non-active areas are released for other uses.

3. Unrestricted site release : Major work of dismantling reactor vessel and piping is done with specialised remote handling techniques. The debris is then taken away, for permanent storage in steel-lined shallow land repositories, in locations duly approved by the Regulatory Body. The remaining areas of the plant are decontaminated and released for unrestricted occupancy (greenfield conditions). This takes about five years.

An alternative to the 3-stage decommissioning is "the prompt dismantling mode of decommissioning", which can be resorted to, if need be, to complete the job in about ten years. This comprises of stage-1 without storage, followed immediately by stage-3, but involves higher costs and man-rem exposure.



Tarapur Atomic Power Station

Typical small scale prototype nuclear power plants under demonstrative decommissioning in some selected countries.

Country & Plant	Type	Capacity Net MWe	Commercial Operation	Current (Aug. 1985) Decommissioning Stage (Planned)
Canada				
Gentilly-1	BLW(Candu)	250	1972-80	1 (3)
Douglas Pt.	PHWR	206	1968-84	1
France				
EDF	GCR	70	1963-73	1 (3 in 93)
Germany				
MZFR	PHWR	52	1966-84	1 (2 in 84)
USA				
Dresden	BWR	200	1962-78	1
Indian Pt.(1)	PWR	257	1962-80	1 (3)
U.K.				
Windscale	AGR	28	1963-86	1 (3 in 87-93)

Some 100 large sized nuclear power plants will complete 30 years of commercial operation by 2000 A.D. Decommissioning will become a routine industrial activity, a decade from now.

Since 1960, more than 65 reactors have been decommissioned the world over, and the accumulated experience shared by all the member countries of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Decommissioning costs have been estimated to be less than 2% of the total cost of generating electricity and man-rem exposures less than 0.1% of those caused by natural background radiation.

Decommissioning plans for Indian nuclear power plants.

The maintenance work carried out in radioactive areas during the last two decades at TAPS, RAPS & MAPS, the decommissioning of a test reactor at BARC, the refurbishing of the fuel reprocessing facility at Trombay and the participation of Indian scientists and engineers in evolving decommissioning codes and guides at IAEA, have provided broad-based experience and expertise. A dedicated group has specifically studied in depth, decommissioning pre-requisites and made detailed plans for Indian nuclear power plants.

TAPS will be the first plant ready for decommissioning by 2005 A.D. with RAPS & MAPS following in 2010 and 2020 A.D. Using the 3-stage decommissioning may take 40 to 50 years for each multi-unit plant. The concept of decommissioning and the concern for public safety demand a planned, deliberate delay of about 30 dormant years for radioactivity to decay, so as to derive adequate dividends by reduction in man-rem doses.

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Want to know more about nuclear power? Send your queries to:

NUCLEAR POWER CORPORATION
(A Govt. of India Enterprise)
Centre No.1, 16th & 20th Floor,
World Trade Centre, Cuffe Parade,
Bombay-400 005.

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STRANGERS WHEN THEY MET

Surendra K. Gupta
STALIN'S POLICY TOWARDS INDIA 1946–53
South Asian Publishers, New Delhi (1988) pp.293, Rs. 150/-

Comment by Nirmala Joshi

Indo-Soviet relations took a dramatic turn for the better, when Nikita Khrushchev and Bulganin visited India in the middle of the 1950's. Since then, these relations have been most stable compared to Soviet relations with other Third World countries. Indo-Soviet relations also became an example of relationship between two countries belonging to different socio-political systems. Naturally, scholars in India and abroad were attracted towards this growing relationship. But the scholars studying the relationship between India and the Soviet Union focused their attention mostly on developments since the mid-fifties. Important formative years during the Stalin period were largely neglected by them. This may be because of some misconceptions.

THE INITIAL PHASE : STALIN ERA

Yet the initial period in Indo-Soviet relations is an interesting phase from an academic point of view. This was the period when both countries moved away from hostile postures, based on mutual misperceptions, to lay the foundation for friendly relations. India and the Soviet Union suspected each other's motives. But later, they began to develop better appreciation of each other's policies and realised the existence of convergence of interests.

In the book under review, the author has tried to dispel some of the misperceptions. The author has focused on this first phase of Indo-Soviet relations. It is a detailed and comprehensive study of Soviet-Indian relations during the Stalin era.

The author feels that it was in this formative phase of the relationship that the first encounters between the two countries took place at international forums, including the United Nations. This interaction, however, did not have any positive impact on the relations. Nevertheless, in the opinion of the author, the groundwork for the favourable turn in Indo-Soviet relations, which was brought about in the mid-fifties, was laid during the last years of Stalin. "It was during this time when evolution of Moscow's attitude towards non-aligned movement took place". (*p. 275*)

INDIAN ASPIRATIONS—IN LINE WITH THE WEST

However, in his evalution of Indo-Soviet relations the author feels that, if no meaningful ties existed between the two countries in the Stalin era, then the responsibility for this state of relations lay largely with India. India's aspirations lay with the West, and in the author's view, Indian foreign policy in this period was inflexible, It was this inflexibility (on the part of India) that came in the way of India developing friendly relations with the Soviet Union It was not the rigidity ascribed to Stalin, a commonly held view, that hampered the growth of Indo-Soviet relations. In the words of the author, "Nehru's suspicions of Russia's objectives, especially his inability to separate its interest in the Indian communist movement from its national interests, prevented him from at least using the Russian overtures as bargaining chips in his dealings with Washington". *(p.275)*.

However, to say that the lack of friendly ties between India and the Soviet Union during the Stalin period was because of inflexibility in Indian foreign policy is a debatable assumption.

SOVIET PRIORITY—EUROPE NOT INDIA

After India achieved independence, the geopolitical importance of the Soviet Union was not lost on Jawaharlal Nehru. In fact, it was in the hope of establishing friendly ties with the Soviet Union that Nehru sent his sister, Mrs. Vijayalakshmi Pandit as India's ambassador to the Soviet Union, It is a fact, however, that Mrs. Pandit failed to even have an audience with Stalin, during her entire stay in Moscow. This reveals that perhaps, at that time, relations with India were not of a high priority for the Soviet Union. The Soviet attention was focused on Europe, the onset of Cold War there, and the emerging order in Europe. While for India, the trauma of partition, hostility with Pakistan and the building of a new India were some of the high priority tasks. Hence, India turned to the West in the hope of fulfilling some of its aspirations. That Indian hopes were belied is a different matter. Thus, it is plausible that divergence of interests was responsible for the existence of poor ties between the two countries in the Stalin era.

A QUESTION MARK ON INDIAN COMMUNISTS

Similarly, another debatable assumption put forward by the author is that the Indian communists acted on their own initiative in the late forties, which led to the banning of the Party by the Indian Government. Although the Soviet Union may not have chalked out a detailed strategy for India communists, nevertheless the broad parameters of the policy were laid down within which the communists were expected to plan their strategy. Otherwise, it is difficult to understand why violent struggles were waged in several countries of South aud South East Asia at the same time.

The above comments in no way detract the importance of this study. Readers will find chapters IV, V and VI very well researched, especially the Indian and Soviet interaction at the United Nations. Undoubtedly, the book has filled a major gap in Soviet-Indian relations for students of international relations.

Dr. Nirmala Joshi is Associate Professor in the Centre for Soviet & East European Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

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HISTORY OF MUGHAL-RAJPUT RELATIONS – NEW VISTAS

G. D. Sharma
VAKIL REPORTS MAHARAJGAN(1693–1712 A.D.)
Radha-Krishna Prakashan Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, (1987), pp. 388.

Reviewed by P. C. Shastri

The (late) Professor G. D. Sharma of the Department of History, M. S. University, Baroda, created a 'niche' for himself among historians with his book entitled *Rajput Polity* (1977, New Delhi), which was an off-shoot of his doctoral dissertation submitted to the University of Rajasthan and guided by Professor Satish Chandra.

INDIGENOUS SOURCE MATERIAL

During the course of his work as a Research Assistant at the Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, Sharma's attention was drawn to the *Vakil Reports Maharajagan*, a rich plethora of indigenous records available in local 'Rajasthani' dialects and languages, which provided additional vistas of historical source-material of first-hand nature.

These documents have been preserved and classified in the archival collection of the Historical Records at the Rajasthan State Archives, Bikaner.

As J. K. Jain, the Director of the Rajasthan State Archives, Bikaner, writes in his 'Foreword', "This volume on *Vakil Reports Maharajgan* (1693-1712 A.D.) captured the imagination of Dr. Sharma, as this contained documents which are simply fascinating both in terms of their details and description. As the edited documents of the present volume would show, besides giving a lot of political information on the kaleidoscopic changes at the Court, they provide useful details on the economic decadence, rampant corruption even in the higher echelon of the Mughal officials; and which, in fact, had been eating up the vital sap of the empire in a rather unnoticed manner." Jain also adds, "In the detailed introduction to this edited volume, Dr. Sharma has very carefully woven the loose ends of the events and has successfully presented a running history of this period on the strength of these documents in a very capable way."

HOT LINE BETWEEN THE MUGHAL COURT AND RAJPUT PRINCES

According to Professor Satish Chandra, the Mughal Court at Delhi used to be the nerve-centre of power and politics, in which the fortunes of various factions fluctuated according to the changing imperial scenario. During the regimes of the Emperors Aurangzeb, Bahadur Shah and Jahandar Shah, the rulers of both Amber and Jodhpur, namely Bishan Singh and later, Jai Singh, and Ajit Singh, respectively, had kept their *Diwans* (ministers) and *Vukils* (or *Vakils*) (representatives) at the Mughal Court, whose sole function was to keep their rulers well-informed about developments at the Imperial Court. Diwan Bhikhari Das, Bhandari Khivsi and Vakil Jagjiwan Das, for example, were among such representatives.

These representatives would also approach various Mughal princes and Court officials to seek favours for their masters. As a matter of fact, these *Diwans* and *Vakils* served as a 'hotline' of communication between the Rajput rulers and the Mughal Emperor or the Court. In connection with this assignment, they were duty-bound to dispatch detailed reports, known as *arzdashts* on the affairs of the Court.

Sharma describes the nature and scope of these reports in the following words : "The details contained in the *arzdashts*....cover a wide spectrum of informations on the Mughal-Rajput relations, affairs pertaining to the military operations, the Jat affairs, Bahadur Shah's relations with the Sikhs, the court intrigues and politics, the *watan* rights and the *jagir* system, the *ijara* system, *mansabdari*, the working of *hundi*, etc." (*p.3*).

IMPERIAL FURY & COURT MANIPULATIONS

It is noteworthy that when Aurangzeb came to know about Bishan Singh's initiative to rehabilitate the Jats of the Mathura region, the Emperor became so furious that he ordered a reduction of 500 *zat* (unconditional) and 500 *sawar* (conditional) from the Maharaja's *mansab*, and also of 65 *lakh dams* of the *inam*. Consequently, the *parganas* of Toda Bhim and Chatsu were taken away from the Amber ruler and assigned to other *masabdars*. However, the *Vakil* of the Maharaja succeeded in having the former rank as well as the *inam* restored to his master.

Prof. Sharma also comes out with a rather shocking revelation that, "...just after the death of Aurangzeb, the Vakil of Maharaja Jai Singh had approached Amirul-Umra Asad Khan and through him secured the title of Mirza Raja and the *mansab* of 7000/7000 for Maharaja Jai Singh, after paying him rupees 50,000 in cash along with 21 *mohars*. The Vakil of Maharaja Ajit Singh had also paid rupees one lakh to the Amirul-Umra for the title of the Maharaja and the *mansab* of 7000/7000 for Ajit Singh and the *mansab* of 5000/5000 for his son Abhai Singh." (*p. 33*).

A MEET AT PUSHKAR

Then there are details about the meet of Rajput rulers at Pushkar (Ajmer) which was carefully avoided by the ruler of Amber, Jai Singh. Similarly, the episode of the successful rebellion led by Banda Bahadur (refered to as the Guru in the *arzdashts*) against the Mughal Emperor. Bahadur Shah, in the Lahore *suba* with the active support of local *zamindars* also figures prominently in these accounts.

IN BATTLES OF SUCCESSION

The Vakil Reports make it obvious that, as and when the succession battles took place, each warring faction tried to gather and muster as much support of the Rajput rulers as they could, by conceding to the long outstanding demands of the Rajputs. For example, Jahandar Shah issued the grant of the *subedari* o

(*Contd. on opp. page*)

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The Froth On The Waves Of History

D. W. Hamlyn
A HISTORY OF WESTERN PHILOSOPHY
(*Penguin Books*, £ 4.95.)

Review by Manideepa Chakravarty

This volume gives an excellent introduction to the history of western philosophy. Structured in a manner that is didactically admirable, the whole history of western philosophy beginning with the Greeks towards the end of the seventh century B C. (though not particularly in Greece) is subdivided into seventeen sections. Instead of a stereotyped introduction, we have here a serious discussion on the scope of both the history as well as philosophy, especially in the light of the latter's development since the time of the Milesians and Greek colonialism, till the present-day predominance of American philosophers with their technical, formal, science-based and materialistic approach—very much in accordance with a world taken over by sophisters, economists and calculators.

Of course, the reason behind America's predominance now is its vastness. Once the seeds of analytical philosophy had blown across the Atlantic and germinated in America, they bloomed in great profusion there eventually. Also noticeable is an increasing tendency to link philosophy with certain branches of science, particularly psychology and the cognitive sciences.

THE SOCIO-CULTURAL BACKGROUND

Every section is preceded by a survey of the whole cultural, religious, intellectual and social background of the epoch discussed, followed by a discussion of the main figures of the period under study—a discussion that marks this work out from the other histories of philosophy written so far (especially those by Bertrand Russell (1945), Will Durant (1961), and T.Z. Lavine (1984). What is new here is that Professor Hamlyn presents the original flavour of the arguments which philosophers have used, followed by an assessment of them. In the light of their specific historical settings, he discusses whether the philosophers concerned are philosophically important, and critically examines the philosophical importance of particular historical and cultural periods that nurtured particular philosophical ideas.

EVENTS & DEBATES

In brief, this work is about philosophers and events, what Marx or Leibnis would see as the froth on the waves of history. He primarily concentrates on the arguments of philosophers, from the pre-Socratics to present-day thinkers, whose ideas have led to lively debates about such topics as the existence of God, the possibility of a Free Will, the essence and purposes of values and knowledge—focusing upon their similarities and differences, their strengths and weaknesses, their affinities for other successful disciplines of their times in search of models for argument. Thus he unravels the mystery behind the dabbling with Euleidean geometry by some philosophical Rationalists of the eighteenth century.

In every section, one finds questions precisely aimed at enabling the newcomer to the discipline to test for himself the state of his knowledge. And a comprehensive 'person and subject index' appended to the end of this book will, it is hoped, in future, prevent Roger Bacon and Francis Bacon from turning up together to discuss Hegel's world-spirit ! In fact, this lay-out and presentation alone must justify the state-

(Overleaf)

History of Mughal-Rajput Relations ..

(Continued)

Malwa to Maharaja Jai Singh and of Gujarat to Maharaja Ajit Singh, as part of his desperate efforts to mobilise military support against Farrukh Siyar (see p. 17). However, the rulers of both Amber and Jodhpur showed reluctance over accepting the offer, in view of the gravity of the situation.

LAND REVENUE & TRADE

The accounts also throw light on tha Mughal period's land revenue and financial system in which the banker (*mahajan* or *sarraf* or *vyapari*) used to play a vital role. Acquiring surety from a banker of repute was the most important aspect of the *Ijara* system, as the *patta* of *Ijara* could be issued only after furnishing surety by the *ijaradar*. This practice kept the banker in a state of great risk Therefore, he used to charge interest and commission on the money he transmitted to the *jagirdar* on behalf of the *ijaradar*. The bankers used to keep themselves away from Court politics.

There is also a fairly detailed account of the prevalent *hundi* system. Sharma has this to say about it : "The *arzdashts* . . . reveal that the Amber bankers either had branches or *arhatias* or credit in the firms situated at Jahanabad, Lahore and Aurangabad. In case of Lahore, our data suggests that at least three bankers of Amber, namely Purohit Syamram, Dhansukh Gujarati & Khadagsen Hathisen had either their *gumashtas* or *arhats* at the *sarrafa* of Lahore." (*pp. 36–37*).

There is no doubt that the volume *Vakil Reports Maharajgan* is a fairly authentic account of the 1693–1712 A.D. era based on unexplored data, and provides us glimpses of the 'real power politik' active at the Mughal Court. For that, Professor G. D. Sharma deserves full praise. It would have been better if the learned author had also tried his hand at providing a conceptual framework.

Dr. P.C. Shastri is an Assistant Professor (cum-Translator) in the Deptt. of Political Science, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur.

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THE FROTH ON THE WAVES OF HISTORY

(Continued from page 19)

ment that this book is a must for every beginner and indeed for anyone interested in the history of western philosophy. Moreover, with his natural clarity and lightning acuity, Professor Hamlyn engages anybody who is intellectually inquisitive. He relishes debate and never hides behind jargon.

CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHERS : SOME QUESTIONS

In view of this, no one will find it a piece of negative criticism to suggest that the selection of material, both as regards the number of philosophers discussed and the diverse problems considered, is extremely restricted. This applies particularly to the section on contemporary philosophers, though a niggardly treatment of them is perhaps pardonable in a book that attempts to cover the whole history of western philosophy in a single volume.

Still, one cannot but wish that Professor Hamlyn had shed some light on questions of great importance to contemporary scholars of philosophy, such as, why Michel Foucault's work as a totality is less well-known than the spread of his theory through the mass media ? Can the reason behind Foucault's work appearing fragmentary, and discontinuous at first sight, be attributed to his most general formula—"Discourse" or "discursive practice" ? Where exactly does one place Foucault in the long line of western philosophical continuum ? Do his earlier works falsely seek to "harmonize" ? Why do his various works contain the same word "arehaeology" in their titles ? Why is Jacques Derrida's theory of philosophizing known as "deconstructionism", interpreted as a thwarted philosophy of origins of metaphysics by English-speaking philosophers ?

Nevertheless, one must say that Professor Hamlyn has succeeded convincingly in squeezing the whole history of western philosophy into a relatively small compass without having to accept inaccuracies in the presentation in a manner that is at once enlightening as well as gripping.

AFTER NIETZSCHE . . .

The work also deserves praise for boldly marking a departure from the custom of allowing any history of western philosophy to end with Nietzsche's death in 1900 (also the end of post-Kantian German philosophy) to the exclusion of the present day. In contrast, Professor Hamlyn discusses, though very briefly, Husserl and phenomenology, Husserl's philosophical antipode, Russell and analytical philosophy, interpreting all with great understanding. Then follows another *volte-face*, Heidegger and existentialism. Sections have also been devoted to Marcuse and the "New Left" on the one hand, and to Wittgenstein and the "linguistic turn" on the other.

However, in this reviewer's view, it would have proved immensely interesting from the point of view of method, if Professor Hamlyn had juxtaposed the opposites, since a sequential presentation of such controversial philosophical movements would have much better highlighted the divisions between them and; given the reader a more satisfactory survey of points their arguments have in common and points where they differ.

THE GREAT GREEK TRIAD & TWO MEDIEVAL GIANTS

In this otherwise cleverly contrived book, the discussions on the Pre-Socratics, the Sophists and the post-Aristotelian schools, in all their wealth of forms and meanings, is a much desired pleasant change from the bold speculations so frequently to be met with in this area. Even the "unwritten" concerning the great Greek triad in philosophical matters—Socrates, Plato and Aristotle—have been dealt with critically. The two sections on the new Christian philosophy described as a synthesis of faith and knowledge, though couched in general terms, must also be described as comprehensive and convincing. It is here that the two giants of medieval philosophy, Augustine and Aquinas, with their concepts of "inwardness" and "Five ways" respectively are critically examined.

KANT, FICHTE AND SCHELLING

Though Professor Hamlyn sees the philosophy of modern times culminating in Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) and also hails him as the great giant of philosophy, in this reviewer's opinion, the important fact that Kant was only marginally successful in his aim at linking up a new metaphysics with physics, because of his inability to bring to completion a theory of *a priori* physical laws with any degree of clarity and completion, has been totally ignored by Professor Hamlyn. Moreover, Fichte and Schelling certainly deserve more than an occasional brief mention as in this work.

Professor Hamlyn deserves praise for his masterly grasp of the main problems confronting Descartes, Spinoza and Leibniz on the one hand, and Locke and Hume on the other, all these philosophers (excepting Descartes) being seen as Kant's precursors.

Finally, one is in full agreement with Professor Hamlyn when he says, "in philosophy, golden days cannot last for ever". But he may be delighted to know that good ideas can, though usually in slightly different forms. For instance, Ayer's logical positivism, once declared dead, is enjoying a sort of a comeback in the reincarnated form of "anti-realism" !

Ms. Manideepa Chakravarty is presently doing her M. Phil. in the Department of Philosophy, Jadavpur University, Calcutta.

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ADORATIONS—EXCITING & TRANQUIL

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Gopi Krishnan : SUNBIRDS IN THE RAIN
Writers' Workshop, Calcutta (1988) Pp 74; Rs. 80/-
Rs. 40/- (Flexiback)

Review by R. C. Sharma

Sunbirds in the Rain is a second volume of verse by Gopi Krishnan. A slender compiliation, its contents have been split into two fractions. Should there be any measured rationalization behind such proclivity, the poet only can explain. The first part consists of 39 poems and the second has 18. The title poem 'Sundirds in the Rain' is at the end of the first part.

The pieces which touch many facets of human life, tend to reveal "the prismatic colours on the oil strains flowing with rain water...(and) make you more human, more compassionate, sometimes most trivial". The poet professes to speak of this moving energy through these poems, but he has to grapple with his restraints and circumscribed capacities. The hysterical infatuation as demonstrated in the lines—

Like a wet moth in the rain
I long to burn
In your candle light
For warmth ... "Light"....*p. 15.*

soon forfeits its emotive excitement when, even in this supreme sacrifice, he ruefully sees the lingering shadow of death in an unwelcome separation—

It is not farewell
that matters
You have made it
simple as death. "Heartbreak" *p. 12.*

Death divides or unites ...does it ? It is a quaint question which still bewilders great philosophers and wise speculators. He is passionately attached to the unknown(?)...."In beautiful mask wear" ("The Window Pane" *p. 25*) whom he would like to "search from one valley of spring to another/caught in a drop/of heart's adoration/where teardrops linger/And become blood". "The Execution"....*p. 26*

In many other pieces, Nature has been personified. Through its irregular and differently coloured patches, he peeps into the smile of red lilies, the dreaming laughter of mermaids and seeks to annihilate his individual identity with a view to negating the lopsided tilt of his rambling self treading towards sensuality and voluptuousness. A characteristic contour would ventilate his unsullied fantasy with fervent felicity—

You turned in my direction
Beauty had love's perfection
Love was most beautiful. ...."Water Snake" *p. 31.*

Again, in the same disposition,

Let us burn this flesh
Holding on to each other's hands
In the bonfire
Where we first
Burned our masks. "The Mask"...*p. 38.*

The sentiments which initially appear to be romantic and fantastic, justly have a deep strain of subjectivity too, though impenetrable: yet it is lavishly introspective and of elemental approximation. The poet becomes intensely articulate and vibrant while expressing the mercurial modes of life, which many times touch the borders of carnal gratification—

The Nights fall on my mind/like black seeds...
Your breasts/Roll out/like/Heads of cupids....
"Silence"....*p. 42*, and "In the Room"....*p.43*

There is a sudden leap from the hedonistic vivacity to the heart-left tranquility, and in poems like "Sunbirds in the Rain", he tries to ruminate on the ultimate sordidness of the worldly sophistication and deceptive charms of velvety pleasures. This journey towards realism comes as if it is his confession of being pestered so far by bizarre beats of life. The beauty, the fire and the polish—all have their magnetic powers to draw. But does this power lead to attain perfection with resolute self-reliance and steadfast perseverance ? This angosticism is explicit in the lines—

The desire for her grows and grows
Like musk in musk deer it shows.
"Sunbirds in the Rain" *p. 50*

The second part of the book contains pieces which seem to be detatched from the plurality of complex earthly issues and delicate overtures of gladsome thoughts. Some reveal the poet's love of nature with its moving and soothing aspects. Poems like "Tribal Girl" (*p. 56*) "Mother" (*p.62*) and "Cemetery"(*p.70*) can be recounted for their appeal both to the head and the heart !

"Nur Jehan" (*p. 71*) is not portrayed as a queen here; she is just a conventional woman endowed with all the debilities attached to frail feminine figures... "Jehangir sleeps on her breasts she opens her thighs/ Time cannot close" . such details may be indecent, but being nearer to worldly reality, they may not be so repulsive !

The domes of the palaces at "Fatehpur Sikri" (*p. 72*) still resound with the melodious strains sung by Tansen and lauded by Akbar. In the poem, the poet upholds the eminence of Indian musical traditions.

The dawn of reality is at its best in the "Night Skies" (*p. 73*) wherein he seems to bid farewell to everything—beauty, love, charm and is apparently free from passion, fire and fondness. He recapitulates "the woman who stood besides him/with lips, rose petals .. All that has changed./Now my hair is grey/challenging neon lights". Certainly it is a recoil of events which now have slipped away into nothingness.

This volume, as hinted earlier, contains poems which are normally enlivening, but some pieces unfold the poet's propensity to project inconsistent images which misfit in such a publication. Some printing mistakes could also nave been avoided with careful proofreading. But that does not impair the pleasure of a cheerful reading of the book.

Mr. R. C. Sharma is a Lecturer in Engligh, in Govt. College, Kishangarh (Distt. Ajmer—Raj.).

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When Industries

R. K. Reddy (Editor)
POLLUTION MANAGEMENT IN INDUSTRIES
Environmental Publications P.B.60, Karad (India)
Pages 365, Price 300.00

Reviewed by L. K Dadhich

The consequences of the ecological crisis in developed capitalist countries go far beyond their state frontiers and give rise to our general concern. Scientists, including social scientists, while analysing the origin and extent of the ecological crisis in the West, have been disclosing its inner connection with capitalism's laws of development and antagonistic contradictions. Science and life are convincingly demonstrating the flimsiness of attempts by capitalist ideologists to shift responsibility for the rapacious exploitation of natural resources by forces or designs of capitalism and colonialism. These also pose an unending ecological crisis which stems from the capitalist mode of production to derive maximum profits and to lower the costs of production. This leads to a "consumerist" attitude towards nature, the drive to convert the physical environment into a collection of *means* for the *ends* of capitalist accumulation. Such tendencies are disruptive from both the social and the ecological points of view.

The book '*Pollution Management in Industries*' is a useful presentation in the context of 'development without destruction'. Nations like India are developing due to industrialisation; but at the same time, they are facing setbacks due to threats of pollution. The book is an attempt in finding some solutions by way of information about industrial pollution and its control, and the management of legal, administrative and technological aspects. In all, 21 papers on various aspects of environmental pollution have been compiled in the book, along with a directory section giving detailed information on (a) Indian organisations related with environment/pollution control, (b) environment/pollution control consultants, (c) environment laboratories in India, (d) Pollution Control Boards in India, (e) international organisations, and (f) manufacturers of air and water pollution control and analytical equipments.

Discussion and information on the Environmental Protection Act, fiscal incentives for environment protection and important books on pollution analysis, management and control are some other assets of the book.

WASTE FROM DISTILLERIES & SUGAR MILLS

In his paper on 'Treatment and Disposal of Distillery Wastes', Dr. Vinod Tare has discussed the problems of distillery wastes, but he gives no solution. However, he has been frank to indicate that the levels of BOD/COD could not be brought down to acceptable standards by anaerobic treatment alone. Not many studies have been conducted on further treatment of anaerobically treated distillery effluents. The area is thus open for further research.

Utilisation, treatment and disposal of cane-sugar industry effluents have also been covered by Dr. G.N. Pandey. He has suggested that with some capital investment, cooking gas can be produced; but he has not indicated the technique, nor has he worked out the levels of investment.

PAPER & TEXTILES INDUSTRIES

Case studies on treatment of Pulp and Paper-mill Waste are discussed by Dr. M B. Gohil. Comparing his studies with Prof. Marais, he has made a good suggestion of having primary units like sedimentation, coagulation flocculation and secondary units like conventional biological process, for checking pollution in pulp and paper–mill plants. Dr. Gohil, however, has not affirmed any possible solution to such pollution.

A bio-technical approach for pulp and paper industry in waste management has also been discussed by Dr. B.N. Nayak. Bio-technology based on industrial lignin waste is in its infant stage and is emerging as a field of active research. The world-wide concern for re-utilization of renewable resources of pulp and paper mills needs further examination.

Dr. S. Rajagopalan has discussed at length his study on waters pollution problem and its control in the textile industry. He has stressed the use of biological treatment alternatives available to textile units viz. trickling filters, activated sludge, rotating biological contact reaction, extended aeration and aerated lagoons etc.

CONSERVATION AT GNVF

Dr. V.K. Karia has made a study of conservation of water at the Gujarat-Narmada Valley Fertilizers Company Ltd., Gujarat. As per his article, a number of innovative measures like recycling of filter back wash paper, utilisation of hydrolyser effluent for irrigation purpose, recycling of fast reuse water have been taken to conserve water; but the report of local inhabitants near the factory is not encouraging.

FLUE GASES FROM ALUMINIUM UNITS

Treatment and disposal of waste water from aluminium industry is discussed by Dr. A.N. Khan, but no solution to pollution due to outgoing flue gases containing aluminium chloride fuses has been suggested.

INDUSTRIAL EFFLUENTS : A GLOOMY PICTURE

Dr. S.K. Ghosh has presented a gloomy picture of waste water treatment in industries, and has discus-

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Create Pollution

sed exhaustively the important applications for treating organic matter, like lagooning in oxidation ponds, bio-absorpation, spray irrigation, anaerobic digestion cavitation system, deep-well injection etc. He has successfully explained various treatment methods for selected industrial effluents.

Advanced/tertiary treatment techniques for waste water treatment have been enumerated by Dr. A N. Khan. The paper is worth reading by researchers interested in the field of waste water treatment.

Giving details about principal manufacturing processes and sources of waste waters, Dr. A. N. Khan has suggested some solutions to curb water pollution in his paper "Treatment and Disposal of Waste-Water from Petroleum Refineries".

A biological approach for removal of heavy metals and toxic substances from waste water has been enunciated by M. Siva Parvathi *et al.* They have made a very interesting finding on enzymes precipitating certain toxic chemicals in waste water. This seems to be an easy and simple approach for the removal of toxic chemicals; and this may be applied to other substances which are generally resistant to microbial degradation.

REMOVAL OF COLOUR & HEAVY METALS

Dr. J. Karthikeyan has described his studies on removal of colour from industrial effluents. He has analysed the causes of colour pollution problems. There is a need for sound scientific knowledge to give fresh clues for the solution of this problem; but that is missing in the text.

Dr. Vinod Tare gives good analysis of removal and recovery of heavy metals from industrial effluents. The article has described the sources, effects, problems and solutions related to the discharge of heavy metals industrial wastage of aqueous nature.

CONTROL OF AIR POLLUTION

A much needed article on air pollution control devices has been contributed by Dr. S. K. Ghosh. The paper discusses at length the structure and functioning of various devices used for controlling air pollution. These devices are used for restoration of the air quality. The article is a good attempt to introduce the equipments and measures to curb air pollution. Drs. V.K. Karia and D.H. Desai have also described the air pollution control and monitoring at the GNFC, Gujarat. But they are silent about the views of the local inhabitants regarding pollution near the industrial site.

SAFETY AUDIT OF HAZARDOUS WASTES

Dr. A.N. Vakil's article on safety audit and hazardous waste treatment is of common interest, which presents the various elements of effective safety and environmental auditing. The author has rightly pointed out the new trends in industrial practice moving towards avoiding "the headaches" or hazards arising from the generation of hazardous wastes. This is an appropriate time for the industrialists to understand their responsibility towards "a pollution-free and wasteless society" in a clean and healthy environment.

ENVIRONMENTAL INDUSTRIAL REGULATIONS

Due attention to the observance of environmental regulations is an essential part of siting, design, construction and operation of all industrial facilites in India. The article on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) presented by Dr. A.N. Vakil covers these aspects. It is quite exhaustive, elaborate and informative, based on the working experiences of the author. Illustrated with practical examples, it covers a very wide range of topics.

A thought-provoking article on legal aspects of environmental pollution is by Dr. T. Chakrabarti. The legal implications of industrial development and pollution should be made known to all. Both the public and private sector industries must take care of environmental laws to provide a clean and healthy industrial environment.

MARINE POLLUTION

Marine pollution in the oil and gas industry is arising from drilling platforms, pipelines, tankers,ships etc Control of such type of pollution through statutory regulations has been suggested by Dr. A.N. Khan. It is believed that the oil as well as the shipping industry share common responsibility for the pollution causing damage to marine life. He, however, has not given any proper solutions to this type of pollution.

BIOLOGICAL CONTROL OF WASTE WATER

Drs. R.K. Trivedy and G.G. Joag have discussed methods of biological control for treatment of industrial waste water. Water hyacinth, according to them, is a plant having the capacity of purifying the water. In a very exhaustive study, the authors have established that water hyacinth (*Jal Kumbhi*) can substantially remove BOD, COD, N, P, Ca, Mg, Na, K, oil and grease dissolved and suspended solids from waste water. Water hyacinth can also absorb phenols, organic compounds and certain pesticides. A practical solution for dumping of the used water hyacinths has, however, not been discussed.

The book contains important information in the second part or the Directory Section. Repetition of many names of organisatious and consulting agencies, however, shows some lacunae at the editing level.

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YOUNG SCHOLARS' SECTION

Gujarati Migrants in Tamilnadu

Leila Narayanan :
ETHNICITY IN URBAN CONTEXT
Rawat Publications, Jaipur, 1989.

Review by Uma Arora

In recent times, ethnicity and ethnic groups have become important pnenomena to study.

Economic and scientific developments and the outcomes of the modern state were assumed to weaken the ethnic identities, allowing assimilation and adjustments with the existing majorities. Countrary to this, fragments have led to reaffirming the ethnic identities. Ethnic fragmentation erupts as economic development slows and stagnates. Migration results in the mobilization of certain characteristics of the group. These may be race, language, religion, common history—any one of them or all of them altogether. Thus, ethnic collectivities can be separated through these characterisites at different levels. Ethnic identity becomes a category to analyse a concept limited by ethnic indication. It is mainly the subjective awareness of ethnic distinctions that leads to collective action. Though the migrating groups prefer to co-exist with the host group due to existential necessity. At no stage, they like to merge their identity; and try to maintain their self-identity.

GUJARATIS AMONG THE TAMILS

In the volume under review,the author feels a need to study the new agglomeration. The attitudes of the host society—Tamils in Madras—and that of the migrating community, Gujaratis, are observed. The author intends to understand co-exixtence of two ethnic groups in an urban context; but deals only with upper crust of the society. There is no mention whatsoever of the under-privilleged classes of either of the cultural groups.

INTERACTIONS : CULTURAL & STRUCTURAL ASSIMILATION

The perspective covers the interactions taking place between groups, as well as several factors that influence these interactions. An attempt is made to study the levels at which ethnicity functions by comparing the patterns of ethnic and inter-ethnic communities. The Tanjore Gujaratis (the earlier migrants) and the recent migrants differ in their acculturization. With the Tanjore Gujaratis, the time factor has resulted in complete identification with the host society. They consider Tamil Nadu their homeland and show least interest in any local news of Gujarat. They have adopted Tamil as their language, and even elderly women read and write Tamil. The later migrants i.e., the Jains, as well as Brahmins (Gujaratis) have retained patterns of rituals and food habits. Endogamy is strictly maintained both by the earlier and later migrants. A spouse is searched within the same community, even intermarrying with the later migrant Brahmins. For Jains, it is common to search for a spouse back home or within the migrated Jains in Madras. Thus it is concluded that cultural assimilation differs from structural assimilation.

Both ethnic groups maintain friendships outside their own groups. Business and educational institutions have restricted movement and ties with Tamils. Thus the younger generation fosters friendship within their own group. Though ties with native land are maintained, this does not mean that they wish to migrate back to home state. Cultural assimilation brings about a congenial eo-existance of two differrent groups within a wider society, though the distinction is maintained in a pluralistic society.

NETWORKS

The migrated community exists in a network of organizations and informal social relationships, and keeps reinforcing members of their own community to remain within the confines of their group. On the one hand, ethnic organizations and instituions integrate the migrated community and help to strengthen the ties, specific social values and beliefs, provide a base interdependence within the ethnic community. On the other hand, they constrain the establishment of personal contacts with non-ethnic communities. In an urban and modern setting, frequent migrations reinforce ethnicity. Ethnic institutions and organizations provide a sense of belonging and integrate the migrant community. Thus developed ethnic identities become more salient than class, as they combine interest with affective ties.

A WORLD OF THEIR OWN

The author contends that "Ethnicity functions either in an expressive or instrumental manner" (*p.184*). Multi-ethnic societies reinforce loyalties and ethnic relationships which are influenced by the host group. As this study shows, the migrants in India prefer to create a world of their own as a mini-ethnic home for themselves. They carve a niche for themselves in the economic sector, as well as the social interactions complete with kin, neighbours and diverse ethnic institutions.

Today in modern urban areas, communicaton has increased migraton, leading to interdependence between various sections; hence making contact is a must for them. According to this study, in societies where this interdependence does not take place and social networks and contacts are not built up, prejudices develop against migrants." It is lack of social integration that is responsible for some of the tensions between groups . . . "Thus the need is for creating situations

(Opp. page)—→

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THE DESERT SINGS ON . . . .

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Vijay Verma : THE LIVING MUSIC OF RAJASTHAN
Foreword by former Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi
Price Rs. 225/-

Comment by Chetan Karnani

Most books on Indian music merely talk about music in the abstract The real referent is always missing. Vijay Verma writes with his ear on the object. There is a long-playing record as part of this book which contains fourteen valuable items. They crystallise in miniature all that is rich and varied in the folk music of Rajasthan. The book provides an interesting, practical criticism of these exhilarating folk songs.

The author has one more objective in writing this book. He is interested not only in music, but also in "the poetry, the performer, the audience, the occasion and the context". Each song is written not only in *Devnagari*, but also the Roman alphabet. The semantic content of every song is carefully analysed, Side by side, there is notation not only in Bhatkande style, but also the staff notation in the style of Western music.

THE PERFORMERS & THEIR SONGS

The author is genuinely interested in the performer. He has met all the artistes personally and studied their caste and cultural background, For instance, he met two poor artistes, Chuno and Panchuri, who sang brilliantly the Ballad of Pabuji The couple were dressed in tatters, yet they made up for the poverty of their garments by the fertility of their folk ideas. The destitute singers had neither regular audience nor a steady income. It would be a sad day for folk music if Chuno ends up as a labourer in a mill, while Panchuri does household chores in an urban slum.

The author provides an appropriate context for each text. The context is illustrated by brilliant sketches, which bring the entire scene alive before the mind's eye.

MARRIAGE & CHILD BIRTH

There are two songs in this collection, associated with marriage ceremony. One of these songs rendered by Ramzan is in *raga Soob*, which is used only in folk music, though it has an obvious affinity with the well-known classical *raga Kalingra.*

The song associated with child-birth is rendered by the international celebrity, Siddipue Manganyar, who is a master as much of melody as of rhythm. His own accompaniment on *khartal*, which has two wooden frames provided with disc jinglers surprises every-one by his artistry and virtuosity.

A PASTORALE FROM ALWAR

In the L.P.G, pure folk music is sung in high-pitched and sonorous voice by a young lad named Isra from the thick forests of Alwar. He gets brilliant accompaniment on pastoal flute from his mentor, Hurmat. The song set in *raga Pahadi* has all the idyllic charm of Theocritus and the shepherds of Kulu valley.

SONGS OF DEVOTION

The best piece in this collection is a devotional song by Sohoni Devi who accompanies herself on *Chautara.* She has not only a mellifluous voice but also authentic feeling and moving simplicity On the other hand, Gauri Devi excels in classical ornaments like *meend* and *murki* in her rendering of *Mand* which has a been an outstanding contribution of Rajasthan to the classical music of India.

SINGING COMMUNITIES

Vijay Verma has given a fine analysis of the various styles of singing communities like Langas, Manganiyars, Jogis, Nayaks, Kalbeliyas and Dholis. Obviously, he thinks highly of Dholis, because they get four items on this disc. Verma shows great interest in Kalbeliyas, the snake-charmers of Rajasthan. He feels sorry that their traditional way of life is fast disappearing. Yet a Kalbeliya named Malnath sings the most popular songs named *Panihari*, for which every person in Rajasthan has an endless fascination. This song is set in *shuddha Mand* and *Asa Mand*, two popular variations on the main *raga* This song is usually sung in the desert to relieve the tedium and toil of bringing water from the lake or a pond.

In these days of Disco, folk music is fast losing its authenticity. In many recitals, harmonium—that bastard instrument of Indo-Europeon culture—replaces Ravanhatta, which has all the graces of Sarangi and violin. It is a pity that we treat folk music as fossilised museum piece, instead of treating it as a living art which pulsates with its own vitality. Verma rightly points out that *Living Music of Rajasthan* will survive only if the people become its patrons.

Dr. Chetan Karnani is Reader in Enghish, Jodhpur University, Rajasthan.

→ *(Continued from previous page)*

Gujarati Migrants in Tamilnadu

that would lead to varied, frequent social contacts between individuals of different ethnicity" (P. 191). Multi-ethnic colonies, as well as organizations and institutions, should be encouraged, instead of eco-logical clusters that may develop into alienated ethnic enclaves.

Unfortunately, the author does not elaborate upon the structural mechanisms of the ethnic identity. In fact, this is a crucial issue faced by all, across the world culture, irrespective of their ideologies.. That is what makes ethnicity such a pertinent issue. Besides, conflict occurs between two opposing classes, due to their opposite class interests, and depends upon the prevailing political-economic structure. As this volume covers only the upper caste and class of both the Tamils and Gujaratis, this aspect has not been touched, thus rendering an incomplete view.

Ms. Uma Arora is doing her Ph.D. in Sociology in the South Gujarat University, Surat.

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TALES FOR A SCHOOL MAGAZINE

Syed Rashadath Ali : A NOBLE FRIEND
—Short Stories For Children

Writers' Workshop, Calcutta; Rs. 50, (Hardback).

Comments by M. Prabha

Eight stories comprise this slender volume. If one were to expect some fresh display of fantasy and imagination, lively narrative, and a whiff of true Indian flavour, then the volume runs short of expectations. An unsophisticated and amateur style of writing further add to the reader's embarrassment

"A Noble Friend" concerns two boys, Partho and Sunil, both fond of painting. Sunil's paintings kept with Partho are liked by a rich lady who keeps buying them from time to time She then holds an exhibition where these are displayed as Partho's paintings. In the end, Partho overcome with guilt, comes clean and his 'noble friend' forgives him.

In "Repaid by Kindness" and "Good for Evil", forsaken stepdaughters find willing benefactors and husbands waiting for them. It seems damsels in distress are rescued in the nick of time in Ali's stories, as in Hindi commercial cinema

Stale sentiment and impoverished imagination mar "Raju's Party" and "Honesty Rewarded". In the first, the unfulfilled wish of a poor boy to celebrate his birthday, when his mother is ill, is ballooned into an affliction of gigantic proportions. In the second, Abdul the farmer, gets fabulously rewarded by a princess for retrieving her precious bracelet. No original idea by any means.

"Adventure in the Jungle" having a fascinating narrative with an element of fantasy; "Kingdom Without Thieves" with an interesting plot to hold a young reader's attention; and "Brave Kancha" evoking some homour for its practical wisdom are three passable tales. In the first conte, however, the writer could have flaunted to his own advantage some knowledge of the local fauna and flora. In the second, there is an awkwardness in the bandying of names (King Kumar, King Ashok), as also in "Honesty Rewarded" (Abdul and Seema as man and wife). We appreciate nevertheless the author's secular slant while choosing names (Rupa, Norma, Dilip, Edward, Kancha, Abdul, Peter). Not one of the tales though is strictly rooted in custom, myth or folklore peculiar to any Indian tradition.

Each piece pertains roughly to the genre of the 'old moral tale', as manifest in the unimaginative titling (Noble, Good, Evil, Brave, Honesty, Kindness). Perhaps a subtler form of softened didacticism would have been more acceptable

Deplorable in diction and lacking literary touch, most of the tales regale us more by their synthetical gaffes than by their episodes. Sample :

'*However, though* they waited all night, the tiger did not appear. *But even though* they waited till past midnight, the tiger failed to *put in an appearance.*

(*next column*)—→

When one o'clock came, and the tiger did not, the men felt that the tiger would not appear that night. All, with the exception of Kancha, went off to bed and soon fell asleep. He felt that the tiger would certainly *put in an appearance* in the end. ....Kancha quite trembled at the thought. However, the tiger took quite a while to *put in an appearance. ...Promptly Kancha grew even more afraid.*' . . . (underlinings mine—M.P.)

Mr. Ali's putting of 'put in an appearance' so often would promptly put off any reader !

Ms. M. Prabha is now a Research Scholar in the English Deptt., JNU, New Delhi.

HOLY COW !

Poor cow ! Sacred cow !
You are called a mother
and worshipped as a deity ! Holy cow !

Yet ! They starve you
They neglect you
They use you and abuse you
They refuse to protect you
And not even care to feed you.

They leave you out in the open
To search for food—
All through the day
You loiter in the streets
Looking here, looking there
For a morsel to relieve the pain of hunger.

You are beaten and shooed
Over and over again
Lest you pinch something
From the grocer's basket
Or from the stalls in the market.

All through the day
You keep wandering, looking,
Searching patiently
And finally seiving through the heap of garbage
You seek some shreds of stale belly-fillers
As if a pig, and not a holy cow,
Or a sacred mother.

Holy mother ! The milk you give
Nourishes the babes, the young
The old and the sick—
But your own babe
Struggles to suckle
Some drops from your drained breast.

You watch the cruel world silently !
Your big sad eyes
Tell the story of your life
And of the cruelty by man
From the land, where Lord Krishna
The Cowherd was born.

January '91 **Chandra Sayal**

Dr. (Mrs.) Chandra Sayal, a doctor by profession and settled in U.K. since early 50's, wrote this piece after a recent visit to India.

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Smile Awhile ... !

Kay S. Wye
IT COULDN'T BE VERSE OR WORSE EITHER
Writers' Workshop, Calcutta(1988), pp.66, Rs.50 & Rs 30

Reviewed by Abdul Razaq S Khan

It is a collection of light and humorous verse by Prof. K.S. Yadurajan. published under the pen-name of Kay S. Wye. As the name rhymes, so does the verse. The collection is a beautiful exposition of wit, humour, satire and parody. Even the introduction is in rhyme, where the poet narrates his initiation under the guidance of the comic genius of Shankar of '*Shankar's Weekly*' fame. The whole set makes us 'Smile for a while'.

The characters may not provide us 'little consolation', as there is little 'satisfaction in life itself'. For the poet 'The Donkey' is the symbol of 'slow moving, deep thinking, patiently long enduring' 'middle class bowed down 'with trouble and with taxes'—a very apt description.

The poet is at home while describing the lament of the retiring lecturer whose pension is 'unlikely to keep body and soul together.' As a teacher of English, he knows well the plight of the unemployed M A. who has 'digested well Chaucer, Spenser', but the irony is 'he is dietless'. In some poems, he makes us laugh at his own cost—'baldness quite sparkling' and 'enlarging Hair by Hair!

The poet's skillful employment of irony and satire is vibrant, when we see his patient noticing the dubious faces of the 'Nurse and Doctor' only 'hoping that God and Nature will not let him die—spite of pills and all that.'

A DIG AT DARWIN

There is a very humourous dig at Darwin and his theory, in the poem 'A Touching Meeting.' In the next world, an orang-outang compliments Darwin thus, It is a wise child that knows his father'.

Many of his poems are loaded with references and inverted use of classical and oft-quoted lines of great poets. Shelley might have consoled himself by declaring the poets as 'unacknowledged legislators of the world', but in this collection, the poet seeks 'poetic justice' by putting the 'production of intense passion' into 'visible combustion' in preparation of his morning coffee.

SOCRATES, PLATO & ARISTOTLE

Kay. S. Wye (Yadurajan) has keenly and satirically noted the changing values or their distortion in clear terms. Now people won't offer a Socrates 'the Hemlock', but describe him 'As an insufferable Bore'. They would 'prefer port to Plato and any bottle to Aristotle' —good rhymes showing the contrasting values'. It is a beautiful use of contrast, juxtaposition and parallelism.

In the following lines, there is a challenge to every wise man : "All the wise men of the world cannot baffle a fool". I hope there will be some to lift the gauntlet.

Religious scholars may dispute about the original sin, but one would agree with

'The very idea of sin
Which might just as well be
The original Sin !'

HUSBANDS & WIVES

Tiffs between husbands and wives are not uncommon;but the exposition of the theme in a new syntactical language becomes quite interesting. When the husband makes 'A proposition', it is matched with O'. As the medico husband loses the argument, he suggests, 'What you need is' 'amputation not argument.' This is nothing but the tongue in the cheek. In a similar situation, the mathematician 'sneaks out diagonally through the door'; and the grammarian who is fed with his wife's use of 'passive voice' and 'indirect speech tells 'her plainly' : 'Madam if you do not come to an instantaneous full stop/I may have to change the tense of your existence.'

More sinister was the approach of the atomic scientist who in his calculated move,' Went directly to Satan and said," How about reopening the war with heaven with the help of atom bombs."

LOVE WITH GLUCOSE & HONEY

For long, we have known that there is no remedy for love except the beloved. This is presented with the help of 'Love song of the young Medico' who tries, Malt, Maltose, Glucose, dextrose', but of no avail.

We all know that most humourists are also good advisers. So here is some :
'When a girl says Honey'.
'Tis time to cough up your money.'

And when a lady calls you a 'darling', 'Be sure there is something alarming/in the offing'.

TOPICAL & POLITICAL

The most interesting part of the collection is the 'topical and political'. The poet is always 'present at the same scene of mirth and laughter'. The poem 'Common Platform' is contemporary and shows the poet's contempt for

'.....This contrivance so well set ?
The bolts and nuts, I grant are rusty,
And the structure, sure, a bit rickety;
And round about and underneath
A lot of toads and vipers breathe,
Wolves in plenty '

For the people on the platform, it is 'frolic', but for the poet it is 'diabolic'

(Continued)

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Smile Awhile .... ! *(Continued)*

The defeated Congressmen in the recent elections can console themselves 'waiting for better time.' 'Reflections of an Ex-chief Minister' is nothing but a representation of truth :

'I have done quite a lot,
And my only regret is that scoundrels
Cracked my ministerial pot
Befors I could cook
The couutry's affairs....'

TREMOUR ON MT. PARNASUS :
PARODIES OF GREAT POEMS

Kay S. Wye is a master of parody. He creates 'tremor on mount Parnasus' when he puts his words 'in the mouth' of Shakespeare, Milton and Wordsworth. So we have Polonius in the country of rising sons, advising his progeny in 'double speak' :

'....speak in a two-fold voice
Saying one thing and intending another....
Mark also; the ripe fruit falls to the ground
But a balloon filled with hot air rises high.
So waste not time in study. Keep your head light.
It is not what you know that matters
But whom yoa know.'...

In the piece 'On His Pay', the Indian teacher consoles himself Miltonically—(on His Blindness) —' you at least can sit in the chair and wait'. The poet makes 'Gray Turn in his Grave' by substituting a few words in the same measure (*The Elegy....*)

'Full many a thug of deftest hand, serene
...Full many a victim daily shorn, unseen,
With wasted laments rends the city air !...'

Wordsworth's famous sonnet 'The World is Too Much With Us' is given a humourous turn;

'The wife is too much with us : late and soon
Getting and spending, she lays waste our powers
....Great God ! I'd rather be
A bachelor rotting in a room outworn....'

While Shelley's line 'Our sweetest songs . . . . is turned to 'our damnest slips are those that tell of closest thought.'

So this is pure humour, even at the cost of some great poets. The twist and the turn to the lines of the great masters show us the poet's wit, and the power to transplant the topsy-turvy over the serene and the serious thought of the old poets. The hollow values of the modern world look more hollow when they are ironically and syntactically transplanted in the poems of the great masters—a fantastic transplant surgery of poems.

The collection is delightfully humorous, satiric and worth reading, It is verse and it could not be worse.

Dr. Abdul Razaq S. Khan teaches English at Bahauddin College, Junagarh (Gujarat).

BOOKS RECEIVED

1. **Braej B. Kachru** : THE ALCHEMY OF ENGLISH (Indian Ed. 1989)
2. **A. L. Basham (Edited & Annoted by Kenneth G. Zysk)** : THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF CLASSICAL HANDNISM (1990)
3. **John Stratton Hawley** : KRISHNA, The Brutter Thief (India-1989)
4. **Utsa Patnaik (Ed)** : AGRARIAN RELATIONS AND ACCUMULATION—The 'Mode of Production' Debate in India.

Oxford University Press, 2/11 Ansari Road, Daryaganj, Delhi-110002

1. **Pradyot Chatterji** : A PASSAGE TO LONDON
2. **S. S. Negi** : THE IMMIGRANT
3. **Alex Aronson** : BRIEF CHRONICLES OF THE TIME
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5. **Boudhayan Mukherjee** : BLACK MILK
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7. **M. K. Naik** : INDIAN LIMERICKS
8. **Tong-Choon Shin** : BEYOND LANGUAGE
9. **L. S. Ramaiah & Sachidananda Mohanty** : D. H. LAWRENCE STUDIES IN INDIA : A Bibliography
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11. **Satyapal Anand** : LIFE'S A TALE—A Collection of Middles
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A STORY - TELLER OF GENIUS

GRAHAM GREENE

A Tribute by Madan Gupta

As the century comes to a close, the curtain has fallen on another scene in tho world of literature. Graham Greene who straddled the stage of literary acitivity for over half a century has bid his adieu to the world. In these over fifty years of creative activity, he has left behind him an output which is not only impressive in size, but also in content. The coverage is world wide. The reader is taken from Indo-China to Cuba and the Congo, not to speak of Haiti. 'His '*Confidential Agent*', the *New Statesman* reviewer called "the best highbrow thriller". '*The Heart of the Matter*' earned from Evelyn Waugh the comment—"Mr. Greene is story-teller of genius."

Be it the above or his other creations like the '*Third Man*', they keep the reader firmly glued to his chair till the last page is turned. The film version of '*Third Man*', for which Graham Greene wrote the screen-play,was made memorable by Orson Welles with his superb acting. The film haunted the viewers—for hours after the last reel had rolled on to the spool.

IN THE KINGDOM OF THE RICH

Graham Greene surpassed himself with his writings like '*Dr. Fischer of Geneva or the Bomb Party*' first published in 1980. It takes one on a ride to the kingdom of the rich and the greedy—the games they play with each other and with others. Dr. Fischer, a multi-millionaire who made his money by inventing a toothpaste to counter-act the effect of chocolate eating, gives parties to a small circle of his toadies. They come to these parties and suffer indignity at the hands of their host, merely because, at the end of the party, the doctor gives them fabulous prizes.

The character portrayal of Dr. Fischer is masterly; the dialogue is brilliaant and the satire has the sharp edge of a sword. At one party, cold porridge is served Not even sugar is given with it. Instead, there is salt. The fear of losing the prize makes the toadies lap up the cold porridge. At another, live lobsters are served with bowls of boiling water. Each guest has to catch and cook his own lobster.

The dazzling brilliance of the book makes one blink at times, Its quips on the world of the rich make one sit up. "Big business, like a secret service, demands loyalty from its employees rather than honesty." Or, "All my friends are rich and the rich are the greediest. The rich have no pride except in their possessions. You have to be careful with the poor."

Dr. Fischer's last party is a bomb party. Explains the toothpaste king to his toadies, "You have submitted to a great deal of humiliation and you have accepted it for the sake of the prize which followed. Our porridge party was merely the final test. Your greed was greater than any humiliation that I had the imagination to invent. . . .Now I want to see whether your greed can even overcome your fear. . . ."

CURTAIN CALL

Talking on his eightieth birthday, Graham Greene is reported to have said that at eighty, the big advantage one had was that one was likely to "beat out encountering your end in a nuclear war . . ." Another fear that haunted Graham Greene was that the growing years may rob him of his mental faculties leaving him only with a body that breathed. He did not want to survive himself, as he put it. Providence has been merciful to him.

Though the curtain has come down, generations to come will read Graham Greene with delight and regale at his humour, or sit in wonderment at the thrills he props up page after page, book after book. They will remember fondly what he said about how his characters get born : "Many readers assume—I know it from experience—that an "I" is always the author. So in my time, I have been considered the murderer of a friend, the jealous lover of a civil servant's wife, and an obsessive player at roulette. I don't wish to add to my chameleon nature the characteristics belonging the cuckolder of South American diplomat, a possibly illegitimate birth and an education by Jesuits . . . "I" is not the only imaginary character; none of the others, from such minor players as the British charge to the principals, has ever existed. A physical trait taken here, a habit of speech, an anecdote—they are boiled up in the kitchen of the unconscious and emerge unrecognizable even to the cook in most cases."

As his fairly regular contributions to IBC would indicate, Mr. Madan Gupta is a mature lover of books with a wide range of interests. □

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Good Bye ! Dear Departed !

A Rememberance by Ranbir Sinh

Starting from the second half of the 1960's, through the seventies and upto the beginning of the eighties, theatre enthusiasts all over the country would eagerly look forward to the monthly issues of ENACT. Working almost single-handed, despite a long illness, Rajender Paul used to bring out an excellent collection of articles, interviews, theatre and book reviews and the monthly feature—Translation in English of an Indian (and occasionally foreign) Play.

It is doubtful whether the magazine paid its way; but to the readers, it always gave value for their money, and more. IBC feels privileged that one of our associate editors, Rakesh Hooja, could in the 1970s. contribute about a score of pieces for ENACT Section on Review of Theseian Activities across the country.

The magazine had stopped publication some time ago, and then came the news that Paul was no more. Ranbir Sinh, who was associated with him from the days when ENACT was concieved, has written this remembrance of Rajendra Paul —(Eds)

How can anyone forget the familiar rendevous site of the Indian Coffee House in Connaught Place New Delhi, housed under the canopy of a tent. May have been an ugly sight for some; but that was the place where the artists, actors, poets, novelists, journalists, academicians, intellectuals, political and social workers used to gather. It was the place where they used to exchange ideas over a hot cup of coffee and discuss the contemporary trends in art and literature. It was a place which used to resound with laughter; and yet many a times, there was a heated argument among friends, which threatend to kill the friendship or the bonhomie, sometimes culminating in a parting of company. But the unique thing about the atmosphere at the Coffee House was, that it was not a gathering of individuals, but that of a family. Whenever things hotted up, friends from other tables used to mediate and pacify things, and very soon a fresh round of coffee was ordered, and laughter reigned once again.

It was in this Coffee House that I met a theatre enthusiast after my heart : young, handsome, active, full of ideas, sincerely in love with and devoted to theatre. His name was Rajendra Paul. I think it was in the early sixties that I first met him. I was then working with *Bharatiya Natya Sangh*, as its Executive Secretary. Other names of the members of our coffee table whlch I recollect with tender and fond memories include Paul Jacob, R.G. Anand, Sarveshwar, Dr. Lakhshminarain Lal, Mudra Rakhshas, Nemi Chand Jain, Suresh Awasthy, Charles Fabri, J.D. Tytler, Habib Tanveer, Vishnu Prabhakar, O.P. Kohli and, of course, there were many others.

Those were the days of renaissance of Indian Theatre. Like the famous saying of Nelson at the decisive battle of Trafalgar, "England expects every one to do his duty", we all, the humble workers, were doing our duty to the Indian theatre in our own ways. Those were the happy days when each one helped the other, appreciated and admired the work of others. We discussed, we disagreed, we fought sometimes over trifles; interesting battles were fought over English and Hindi media, amateurism and professionalism. We would discuss the working of the Sangeet Natak Akademi and demand the enunciation of Cultural Policy. And discuss the Bhabha Committee Report, the very first report on Culture. An angry young man, Rajendra Paul used to participate in the discussions with great fervour and deep passion. Amusing thing was that he used to start his discussions in English, but when the discussions used to warm up, he used to switch on to his chaste Punjabi. It was the other way round with me. I used to start in Hindi but soon, when I lost patience, I used to switch on to English It was amusing how we used to pull the leg and make fun of each other over the use of Hindi and English, but one thing was certain, we never lost sight of the theatre in our arguments.

One very fortunate thing of that era was that there were no *Kendras, Bhawans*, no *Melas* or *Utsavs*, no cultural shops, no foreign grants, and above all no political interference, to divert our attention. Like Arjun's aim our eyes were fixed on *THEATRE*.

How excited Rajendra Paul was, when he came with the proposal of starting a theatre magazine in English. I must admit that I was one of those who persuaded him not to do so. Because I had the experience of starting my own theatre magazine in English known as *NATRAJ*. And also, at that time, I was looking after the publication of *NATYA*, the official magazine of Bharatiya Natya Sangh. I told him how difficult it was to get the right people to write for one or to reject some articles and invite the danger of losing friendship. I warned him that one had to work as an editor, as a proof-reader, as compositor, as an designer and finally as a mailing clerk.

Rajendra Paul was made of much sterner stuff. He was bent upon bringing out the magazine. All that he wished from his friends was a promise that they will write for him. The rest is history in Indian Theatre. He brought out a very beautiful magazine known as *ENACT*. I must point out that Rajendra Paul had great sense of aesthetics; and all his printing work had stamp of class. *ENACT* was not only beautiful to look at, but it was most readable, and it raised very pertinent and contemporary issues of Indian Theatre. It was the only magazine at that time which offered the English translation of a contemporary Indian play in almost every issue.

Once again,each issue of *ENACT* used to be a topic for discussion at our coffee table. Irrespective of our friendship and the comradeship of the coffee table each article was frankly discussed and criticised. The (local) author and the editor always took the criticism

(opp. page

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Wise Counsel of A Judge, Jurist & Parliamentarian

M. Hidayatullah : MISCE LANEA—The Pick of the Former Judge's Miscellanies & Later Writings. *N. M. Tripathi, Bombay (1988) pp. 338, Rs. 150/-*

Comments by Justice V. S. Dave

Justice Hidayatullah's '*Miscellanea*' is in the category of literature of knowledge. The literature which has sprung from the depth and fullness of intellectual and moral life; from an energy of thought and feeling; from the sense of nationality—the nationality which is impossible without self-respect, and self-respect which is impossible without life and liberty. Bovee once observed, "Books only partially represent their authors; the writer is always greater than his work". This holds for the writer of the book in hand. This book contains speeches which are rich and delightful. Even if one may not have heard the speaker, the reading offers mellow tones of familiar speech—richer than the richest music - which would have been a real delight if listened to. Speeches on a variety of topics.

ON CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

The book exhibits the depth the author has. The speech delivered by him on the occasion of the Constitution Day of Manila (Phillippines) shows his deep knowledge and comparative study of the various Constitutions of various countries. The author has warned about the frequent amendments in the Constitution and has said, "Amendment for amendment's sake is hardly worthwhile. The change must be vital to the community; and then it may be radical; but the facade of the Constitution namely, the entrenched rights of the people, the republican character of the State and all those which the nation holds dear must, of course, be preserved". The lecture shows his concern about personal liberty and human rights.

RULE OF LAW & HUMAN RIGHTS

Then there is the famous speech delivered by the author at Geneva on the occasion of Law Day, where he emphasized the need of celebrating the World Law Day, as the key-note of the celebration is Human Rights. The speaker traced the history from the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property of 1883 to Old Age and Survivors' Benefit's Convention adopted by I.L.O. to provide the guidelines. In the words of the author, "The next plan of action will be to study the problem of legal aid in all countries and how the problem is tackled in each country, as it is the legal aid for enforcement of rule of law and human rights which will lead to the enforcement of these rights at State and International level to evolve effectuation of rule of law and human rights".

(Continued averleaf)

Good Bye ! Dear Departed ! *(Continued from page 2)*

in very sporting terms. A thing which is not found today.

When I quit the job of Bharatiya Natya Sangh and took up an assignment with Rajasthan Sangeet Natak Adademi and was posted at Ravindra Manch in Jaipur, Rajendra Paul maintained the same love and affection, and kept in constant touch with me. He used to write to me regularly asking me to write for *Enact*. He kept in constant touch with all my theatrical activities. Wrote about the plays which were produced by me, theatre workshops that I organised and, of course, the International *JAIPUR FESTIVAL* of Performing Arts.

How can I forget his love, kindness and words of encouragement when I was working with *YATRIK* in Delhi, and we were trying to build a professional theatre. But fate has never been kind to me. It has never allowed me to stay at one place for a long time and work in a sustained manner. I left *YATRIK* and became a struggling freelancer in theatre. I still remember the premier night of my play *SARAI KI MALKIN* produced by the Little Theatre Group and Directed by B.M. Shah. After the show was over, I saw a beaming Rajendra Paul coming towards me, and as I write today, I feel the pressure of his bear hug. He was the first to congratulate me.

After having gone to Mauritius as the Cultural Advisor to the Government of Mauritius, I lost touch with him. *Enact* had closed, and Rajendra Paul had become the Vice-Chairman of Sangeet Natak Akademi.

Very recently, in the last week of March, after many years. I was pleasantly surprised to receive an invitation from Sangeet Natak Akademi to be a member on the Panel of Experts and attend the National Drama Festival, It was an unique opportunity for me to have met several of my old friends from threatre Paul Jacob, Kiranmoy Raha, Indira Parthasarthy, Shyamanand Jalan, Satyadev Dube, Rajendra Nath, Mudra Rakshasa, Raj Bisaria and, of course, Rajendra Paul.

What a great pleasure it was to have met him after many years ! I have the feeling that it must have been Rajendra Paul wanting to meet his old friends that I was invited. And very sadly, it was our last meeting. I cannot forget the twinkle in his eyes and the smile on his lips when he shook hands with me and said good-bye. He uttered his last words, "Ranbir, I may not see you tomorrow." I never knew that he would keep his words, as he always did in his life.

As he has mentioned above, actor, director and playwright, Ranbir Singh of Dundlod (Jaipur) is actively connected with Indian theatre. □

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ON DELAYS IN JUSTICE

The author has great concern about the delays being caused in the administration of justice; and addressing the Bar Association of India, he suggested that the deliberations in the seminar should be in the spirit of reform, true and simple. Realising at the same time that the lawyers are not the leaders of public opinion, (they are only expected to aid in forming public opinion) he said, "You must remember that you are—in the words of Justice Holmes—like little children going ahead of a procession. If you turn into a side lane, the procession does not necessarily turn into that side lane." He also suggested the need of holding pre-trial conciliations, conferences and introducing computers.

PARLIAMENTARY PRIVILEGES

His speech on 'Parliamentary Privileges, Press and Judiciary' is by itself a treatise. The reading of the speech demonstrates Justice Hidayatullah's eloquence—an eloquence which has a great charm. The erudition shows something greater than eloquence. The speech is extremely educative. The speaker has shown his indepth study of the history of United Kingdom. Analysing the parliamentary history of privileges, from Tudor Dynasty till date, he capsuled them all—may it be the privilege of freedom from arrest and action, may it be privilege and power to commit and punish for contempt, may it be the right to judge its own privilege, the extent and occasions for their exercise, or may be the controversy which arose out of Sheridan's case. However, he tried to reconcile the controversies by a note of advice :—

"If there is mutual trust and respect between Parliament and Courts, there is hardly any need to codify the law on the subject of privileges. With condified law, more advantage will flow to persons bent on vilifying Parliament, its members and Committees and the Courts will be called upon more and more to intervene At the moment, given a proper understanding on both sides, Parliamentary right to punish for breach of its privileges and contempt would rather receive the support of Courts than otherwise, A written law will make it difficult for Parliament, as well as Courts, to maintain that dignity which rightly belongs to Parliament, and which the Courts will always uphold as zealously as they uphold their own. This understanding is the only solution to the great dualism which need not have, but had unfortunately crept in our polity."

CONSTITUTION, PARLIAMENT & THE COURT

Not on a very different subject, the author, with great authority at his command, delivered Shri Ram Memorial Lecture on the subject—Constitution, the Parliament and the Court, and again, elaborately dealing with all these aspects,sounded a note of caution. It was a time when 24th and 25th amendments in the Constitution of India had been piloted. The speaker said, "I have had to re-write the lecture and was tempted to change the title to A Requiem for our Fundamental Rights; but as they are not fully dead, but only half dead, I leave it alone. I do not intend examining the validity of the amendments, for that may be left to the Courts. I rather speak of the drastic change from the original ideology of our Constitution and to repel some baseless attacks on the Supreme Court."

The author had defended the Court's role, and his view is that there are two methods : one is to call a special Parliament as a Constituent Assembly for the limited purpose of amendment, and the other is to call a Convention.

The author has also spoken about the American influence on the constitutional law of India. In fact, this is a transcription of a lecture where there were several participants, and this chapter makes a very interesting reading. It also contains the dialogues which this author had with Mr. Robert Delson.

A RICH & VARIED FEAST OF IDEAS

The book leaves no subject from his study—the lives and works of the great writers, play-wrights, administrators, jurists and social thinkers. His writings on Justice Syed Mahmood, Dr. Martin Luther King, Junior, Shakespeare and Scottish Chaucerians show how voracious a reader he must have been.

The book serves as a counsellor and as a pitcher always at hand. In the words of Danham, "A book should be for one of these four ends conduce, for wisdom, piety, delight or use," and Hidayatullah's '*Miscellanea*' has all the four. I had the occasion to listen to at least three of the lectures which find place in this book, and I always felt sorry for not having tape-recorded the same. But this book has given much more than I cherished.

A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL PERSONALITY

Though the author has divided the book in four parts—legal, topical, biographical and memorial, and art and literature—but on reading the entire book, the reader would realise as if it is multi-dimensional. The speeches compiled in the second part of the book leave the reader highly educated. The reading of the book also familiarises the readers with the realities of the world situation. He has cautioned that if true democracy has to work satisfactorily in this country, one has to eliminate disease, poverty, ignorance and differences of caste, community and languages.

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Hidayatullah has been one of the few great persons of this century in India, who combined in him a great Judge, a great Lawyer, a great Jurist, a great Parliamentarian and a great Administrator. His range of distinct mind, his untiring capacity to work, his delicacy of movement and charm, his pleasing manners,facile tongue and, above all, his love for nature and its creatures, have made him a highly civilized gentleman and one the great men of our times.

Mr. Justice V. S. Dave is Judge, Rajasthan High Court, Jaipur. □

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A FABLE OF OUR TIMES

Salman Rushdie
HAROUN AND THE SEA OF STORIES
Viking India, pp. 218; Rs. 175.

Reviewed by T. N. Dhar

Haroun and the Sea of Stories can legitimately be seen as a product of Rushdie's enforced confinement in the aftermath of the bitter controversies engendered by *The Satanic Verses*. For, this largely defines its primary concerns and its style. Rushdie chooses the mode of a fable with a veiled allegorical meaning.

FROM A SAD CITY TO THE CITY OF SILENCE

At the centre of the narrative are Rashid Khalifa, his wife Soraya, and his son Haroun; they all live in a sad city. When Soraya runs away with Sengupta, Rashid's story-telling abilities just desert him. After failing to utter even a word in the city of G, he goes to the valley of K,where he is expected to swing the public vote in favour of a politician, by regaling people with merry stories.

Rashid and Haroun have their extraordinary adventures in the city of K, while they are apparently sleeping in a houseboat in which they have been lodged. Haroun gains power over Iff, the water genie, by getting hold of his monkey wrench. Iff helps him make a trip to the Gup city, where he hopes to help his father regain his story-telling powers. On the way, they see the ocean of the stream of story, several majestic buildings and complicated mechanisms, and meet functionaries of the city. They learn of the abduction of Batcheat by the people of the Chup city. Haroun also meets his father, who has been arrested as a spy.

MONSTER OF THE DARK : WISH WATER & SUNSHINE

Haroun volunteers to go to the city of Chup, for which he is provided men, support, and advice. A shadow communicates with them through abhinaya to tell Haroun and his companions about the tyranny of Khattam-Shud who lives in the dark city, which is like a huge ship. When they see him in person, he expands into a frightful monster with plenty of arms, eyes, and heads. He tries to impress them with his menacing power; snubs Haroun for creating stories; and reveals to them his plan to plug the wall-spring of all stories. Just when things do not appear going well for Haroun and his friends, Mali makes a dramatic entry, and crashes on the generator, which is the source of Khattam Shud's dark power. Haroun uses the lighting mechanism which had been given to him by Iff, and the shadows start dissolving. Taking a cue from this, he takes a heavy gulp of wishwater, and asks the sun to shine on that dark ship. When it appears, the whole city melts out of existence; Batcheat is restored to prince Bola, and the colossus of Bezaban is crushed.

Walrus, the controller of affairs at the Gup city, puts everything back to normal. When Rashid is up from his sleep, he finds that his lost powers have been restored to him. He narrates the story of his adventure to the people of the city of K. They see the evil in their leader and choose leaders of their choice. When Rashid and Haroun return to their home, things are normal there too.

FREEDOM & LIGHT *Vs.* TYRANNY & DARKNESS

Rushdie uses the elaborate allegorical design to dramatize the conflict of the forces of freedom and light with those of oppression and darkness. The latter work against autonomy of art, freedom of expression, and freedom of conscience. They scheme to plug the source of thought and poison the atmosphere against it. Like Haroun, Rushdie takes a mouthful of wishwater to crush the black forces and bring the tale to a happy end. But things do not happen like that in real life. The colossus which melts in the story by mere contact with light is of tangible solidity in real life and has to be faced with courage and conviction. Time alone will decide if Rushdie succeeds in withstanding it, as Socrates did.

REAL PLACES CAMOUFLAGED

One can locate real places in the fantastic allegorical narrative of the book. In fact, Rushdie weaves his personal problems with the problems of places we have known in *Midnight's Children*. The city of Bombay can be traced in the realistic details of the sad city. From there, we whoop on to Jammu and then to Kashmir. The bus journey from the city of G to the valley of K is on the Jammu-Srinagar highway. Rushdie provides interesting and humorous variations on the road—messages one encounters on this road. In the wake of trouble in Kashmir, Rushdie writes that there is "bad feeling in town" and "the most joyful of places" has changed; "it was plain that trouble had found its way up here now".

FAIRY TALE GONE POP

The allegorical frame employed by Rushdie is a mix of several traditions and books : *Katha Sarit Sagar*, *Arabian Nights*, *Alice in Wonderland*. However, to give it a twentieth-century orientation, he brings into it the flashy technical apparatus of scientific romances. Looks like the fairy-tale has gone pop. In spite of its kitsch-like quality, however, Rushdie's writing remains engaging as ever. The narrative abounds in felicity of phrase (The Gup city at one time is a "liquid tapestary of breathtaking complexity") and builds a powerful defence of creative imagination. Rushdie describes the ocean of stories with engaging perception : ". . . they retain the ability to change, to become new versions of themselves, to join up with other stories; so that unlike a library of books, the Oceans of the Streams of Story was much more than a store room of yarns. It was not dead but alive". Good luck, Mr. Rushdie ! Keep the ocean alive !

Dr. T.N. Dhar is at present a Fellow at the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla.

[Editor's Note : It may be interesting to mention that in Indian vernaculars, *Chup* is a word for 'silence'; *Batcheat* is talk or conversation; *Khattam Shud* means 'The End', *Bezaban* is without a tongue and *Bola* may well be speech or one who speaks.] □

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The Ambivalent Canadian Experience

Om P. Joneja & Chandra Mohan (Eds.)
AMBIVALENCE : Studies in Canadian Literature
Allied Publishers Ltd., New Delhi (1990) Rs. 175/-

Comment by Rani Dharker

In her charmingly written forward, Margaret Atwood summarizes the ambivalent nature of Canada as a country, and the consequent ambivalent nature of Canadian literature. Like India, Canada is a conglomerate of languages, cultures, climates and tensions. And though the two countries may have many dissimilar features, they have one experience in common : their colonial past when both were parts of the British Empire. A colonial past is reflected inevitably in present writing which is over-whelmingly concerned with the problem of finding one's own voice.

Canadian literature appeared in fits and starts, but in the sixties and seventies, it suddenly exploded into the international scene. Where there was only a trickle, now there is a deluge of literary outpourings, and many Canadian writers are internationally acclaimed.

The history of interest in literature in India is somewhat similar to the history of Canadian literature itself. Initially, only a few were interested, but now scholars rain down in torrents at the annual Canadian studies seminars, which discuss Canadian literature more than history, politics etc. Canadian literature has come to stay, and it is slowly gaining the serious respect hitherto reserved for American and British literature.

In the context of this interest, a book like *Ambivalence* is welcome. It provides a much-needed perspective on Canadian literature and would make very useful reading, indeed, for any scholar embarking on the discovery of Canadian literature.

THE COLONIAL EXPERIENCE : GARRISON MENTALITY & NOSTALGIA FOR NATURE

In the introduction, the editors discuss the notion of psychological colonialism, the sense of inferiority resulting from the colonial experience and the way it affects creativity : "Writing in a colonial space is both constraining and liberating". *(p. xvi)*. The editors argue that writers in this situation use the strategies of ambivalence to lend authenticity to their writing.

The book is divided into three parts entitled 'Perspectives', 'Responses : Canada and India' and 'Analyses'. In Perspectives' the experience of being colonized, the resultant uncertainty and search for Canadian identity in creative works is explored by the Canadians themselves and an Indian critic, Chandra Mohan.

The first essay is by E.D. Blodgett. He discusses the plurality of Canadian literature. Since writers use the discourse of fiction as their distinctive language, Canada, he argues, is a problem in polyvalent discourse. Patricia Morley and Rosemary Sullivan relate literature to its vast Canadian landscape; Sullivan see Canadian literature as a continuous dialogue with th wilderness,

The impulse behind 19th century literature wa what Frye calls the "garrison mentality", the terror striken shutting of self in a fort, just outside of whic breathed the menacing forest. But as technology bega to bulldoze its way through the forest,the terror turne to nostalgia for nature in 20th century literature demonstrated in the example beloved of scholars o Canadian literature, *Atwood's Surfacing*.

REGIONAL / PRAIRIE REALISM *VS.* POST—MODERNIS

One of the most interesting essays in the book i by Robert R. Wilson, in which he enlarges on the Canadian tendency to classify its literature into regions The consequence of this myopic vision is the resistance to international trends in literature such as post-modernism. Many Canadian critics would even now prefer the realistic way of writing that has characterized Canadian literature. Wilson gives the example of an editor who denounced post-modernism and appealed to Canadian writers not to "redecorate reality" with "the brush of magic realism", but to stay faithful to the values of "Prairie Realism".

But, as John Barth says in "The Literature o Exhaustion", literary forms serve their time, ge exhausted and make way for new art forms. It would be embarrassing if in our violent century, we had Monet painting the Charters Cathedral. Or, since on is dealing with the Canadian context, art cannot b garrisoned in a fort, the forest must creep in even tually. Thus, Canada too has felt the thrust of chang in its literature. It can now boast of (or cringe from post-modernist writers, foremost of whom is Rober Kroetsch. Wilton's essay is useful too to any studen of literature, not necessarily Canadian, for its exposition on what constitutes 'post-modernism'.

COMPARATIVE STUDIES : THE STORY OF ELISE AYLE

The 'Perspectives' section concentrates on compa rative studies of Indo-Canadian writing and on th way Canadian writers have written about India. On Joneja examines writers who have looked in on Indi from the outside, as it were. Not all of them ar breathless with admiration. Gordon Sinclair, fo instance, is less than enamoured as can be seen in h classification of Gandhi as "India's Holy humbug".

In contrast to him is a Canadian woman who ha great love for India, so much so that she settled dow here and died here. Our curiosity about this curious an brave woman is satisfied in the next essay in which R.L McDougall tells 'The Story of Elise Ayles'. While stud -ing the works of her husband, D.C. Scott, McDoug came across reference to her, and he followed her tra to India. Much of what she wrote was not publishe and she is not a well-known or even known writer i Canada. But the three essays about her in *Ambivalen* will surely give her some recognition in Canada an will also provide grist to the Ph.D. mill in India.

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RURAL SOCIETY IN HARYANA

Utsa Patnaik : PEASANT CLASS DIFFERENTIATION—A Study in Method with Reference to Haryana
Oxford University Press, New Delhi (1987) p.229, Rs.110

Reviewed by Navin Chandra Joshi

This publication attempts to formulate and apply empirical criterion for the grouping of agricultural house-holds into social classes in the Marxist sense, thus permitting a direct study of their economic characteristics. Hitherto, there have been unsatisfactory analyses done by various agencies or persons in the field of agriculture and they failed to capture either the real divisions of rural society in terms of the articulation of individuals and households within the system of production relations, or enabled one to study the real processes of change in agrarian class relations.

The eight chapters of this intellectual exercise do tackle the problem in a scientific manner. They are replete with economic data for drawing conclusions. There is adequate bibliography given in the book. It can at once be recommended to researchers for understanding the issue of labour use in agriculture.

PEASANTS AND SELF-EMPOYMENT

It has been found that a landlord does not participate in manual work i.e. in self-emloyment in the field, but relies entirely on employing the labour of others, whether directly as hired labour or indirectly as tenants At the other end of the spectrum, the landless labourer also does not engage in self-employment, because he has no means of production, and depends entirely on working for others. All classes of the peasantry engage in some self-employment in manual field work, but the extent of this, relative to employing others or working for others, varies.

The rich peasant relies primarily on employing the labour of others. Conversely, the poor peasant has to rely primarily on working for others. The middle peasants and small peasants are both primarily self-employed, the former being distinguished by employing others' labour to a minor extent, while the latter are either wholly self employed or obliged to work for others to a small extent.

RURAL HOUSEHOLD INCOMES

An important finding of the author is that since Haryana has been widely regarded, after Punjab, as the area of the 'Green Revolution" par excellence, it is shocking that 64.5 per cent households, cultivating below 15 acres of land, and comprising small peasants, poor peasants and petty employers, do not obtain a return of their labour, which is at least as high as that of the casual agricultural labourer with no land. The total income of poor peasants and petty employers from cultivation falls short of the casual labourer households/income from agricultural wage-paid work, while small peasants earn barely as much as the average permanent labour household.

"It is certainly quite remarkable that a much-vaunted 'Green Revolution' area should show the persistence of such poverty among the mass of its peasantry. This seriously brings into question the claims of some economistss who, when analysing data from Punjab and Haryana in recent years, assert that the benefits of the Green Revolution have percolated down to the ordinary mass of the peasantry.

In the author's view, the erroneous conclusions are the outcome of a fallacious method of analysing the data.

Also, it is due to the failure to separate out organisationally distinct farms, the consequent lumping together in the same acreage of *intensively* cultivated *hired-labour* based holdings and *extensively* cultivated *family labour* based holdings, as well as holdings dependent on hiring out family labour. Since in every acreage group, there will be some holdings based on hired labour, representing the capitalist tendency (proportionately more of these, of course, in the large acreage groups) the utterly erroneous conclusion it

(Contd. overleaf below first column)

(*Contd.*) **The Ambivalent Canadian Experience**

SEARCH FOR NEW IDENTITY

In the section entitled 'Analyses', specific works by novelists or poets are analysed in depth. These scholarly essays give useful insights into Canadian poetry and fiction. Jaidev in his essay on *Surfacing* raises an interesting question. "The culture of pastiche", he says, is common to both India and Canada. Both countries have been strongly influenced by America. Why, then, hasn't there been in India a book like *Surfacing* which deals with this problem ?

Coomi S. Vevaina gives interesting illustrations of how *The Handmaid's Tale* is enacted in many parts of the world so that Gilead is no future dystopia, it is with us today. Some other essays provide feminist readings; so one cannot fault the editors for having patriarchal leading. But the concentration on poetry and fiction does raise a question : why the cold shoulder to drama ?

Some of the essays by Indian critics unfortnnately fall into the peculiarly Indian pit of story-telling : while analysing a novel, the Indian scholar has a way of narrating the entire story in great detail.

Otherwise the book provides an insight into Canadian literature, specially into the gropings for a Canadian identity. But isn't it this groping, the ambivalence, this search for self that gives Canadian literature its own distinctive flavour ? What would happen once a sure Canadian voice emerges ? Let us hope it continues to be interesting and innovative and does not become bland and boring as an over-confident person is.

Dr. Rani Dharker, who teaches in the Deptt. of English, M. S. University of Baroda, has done her Ph.D. on Violence, Madness and Comic Reallty in Recent American Fiction. ❑

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Education—An Input To Development

by

V. S. Vyas

Far-reaching social and political implications of education are too well-known to need recapitulation. Its value in encouraging the spirit of enquiry, contribution to the understanding of self and society and supporting efforts to create a just social order are among the outcomes which have prompted all civilized societies to place a very high emphasis on education. On a more narrow plane, education can also be considered as an input to economic development.

CONTRIBUTIONS & SOME RESULTS

This role of education, during the process of development, is performed basically through two interrelated functions:

(i) Education contributes to the raising of productivity of resources, particularly the human resource; and

(ii) Education provides opportunities to enable the poor to cross over the threshhold of poverty.

There is enough evidence to support these propositions.

A recent World Bank Study has concluded that an increase of one year in average years of education may lead to a 3% rise in GDP. The study which examined the determinants of real GDP growth in 58 countries for the period 1960—1985, strongly supported the view that education could contribute significantly to the National Output. Contributions to specific sectors could be equally impressive, as several studies world over have shown. The educated wage labourers get higher wages; farmers who have completed the minimum necessary years of primary education perform better than those who have not gone to school; in the informal sectors as well as in the formal organised sectors, the educated participants get higher returns than their uneducated counterparts.

CROSSING THE POVERTY LINE

In several developing countries, including India, education improves the chances of the poor to cross the poverty line. The reason for this is obvious. Since education can improve labour productivity, and labour is the principle asset with the poor, their earning capacity improves with education A number of studies have shown that social returns to investment in education are substantial (25 to 30 per cent), and in most of the cases these returns are higher than return on investment in other types of economic activities.

Education contributes to economic growth beyond its impact on the economic well-being. Mothers' education is closely associated with the decline in under-5 mortality. The children of educated parents are generally healthier. Though there is no impact of low levels of education on family planning, a longer period of education does affect fertility in a negative manner.

Policy-makers in India have recognised the benefits of education in its wider philosophical connotation as well as its direct links with the economic development. This is reflected not only in several, and repeated, pronouncements by the highest-policy making bodies endorsing the importance of education, but is also translated in terms of monetary resources and sustained human efforts. As an indicator, one can point out that the expenditure on education formed 2.3 percent of GNP in 1960, its proportion had risen to 3.4 per cent of GNP by 1986. *(Human Development Report UNDP, 1990)*

POLICY IN INDIA : THREE OBJECTIVES

The education policy evolved over a period of time in this country impinges on the pace and pattern of economic growth, while pursuing three major objectives: (i) the spread of literacy and numeracy throughout the length and breadth of the country; (ii) creation of a pool of skilled manpower to manage tasks of economic development; and (iii) creation of "centres of excellence" in science, technology, humanties and social sciences to push the frontiers of knowledge, both basic and applied.

I briefly comment on the first objective enumerated above, though I also have a few observations to offer on the last of the three objectives.

SOME POSITIVE GAINS

Looking at the overall scenario and making a balance-sheet of our failures and successes in the field of education, one finds that the negative feaures overwhelm the positive ones. However, the positive achievements are also not inconsiderable. Among

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RURAL SOCIETY IN HARYANA *(Contd. from p. 7)*

drawn that farms of all types are benefiting from the Green Revolution.

The author usefully examines the various interpretations given from time to time by various authorities of the concept of agrarian structure, though she herslf leaves them at that, without formulating one of her own. Quoting from works of K.N, Raj. V. I. Lenin, D.D. Kosambi, Andre Beteille, Ramakrishna Mukherjee, V.M. Dandekar, Rajni Palme Dutt, etc., she tries to bring about some value judgement. But then, she lays more emphasis on the need for knowing how economic variables behave according to the class status of producers/consumers. In any case, the exercise is worth doing for unfolding the mysteries which still remain to be explained in the realm of our agrarian structure.

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Education – An Input To Development

three, one may list : (i) importance of education is now recognized by all sections of society at all levels; (ii) considerable headway has been made in reducing illiteracy. The adult literacy rate (percentage literates among those 15 years and older) was 34 in 1970; it went up to 43 in 1985; (iii) vast and pervasive network of education institutions has been created comprising of schools, colleges, universities and specialised institutions; (iv) several innovative and imaginative experiments have been carried out by groups of dedicated and competent educators; (v) in advanced fields of science and technology, Indian scholars have been able to make outstanding contributions; (vi) the best scholars produced by the system are probably equal to the best produced anywhere else in any subject, (vii) education has proved a potent instrument for enabling poorer households to come out of the poverty trap.

NEGATIVE ASPECTS

In spite of these and several other achievements, the negative side is eqully, if not more disturbing. For example, (i) the rate of growth in literacy and particularly female literacy, is very slow and uneven; (ii) the costs of providing education are exhorbitant, taking into account the poverty of the country, and there is no 'cost consiousness' anywhere in the system; (iii) the managerial capability of the people manning the system at all levels is low, and there are hardly any conscious efforts to improve it; (iv) the system is incapable of monitoring itself or to rejuvenate; (v) the system, even at this early stage of development, is throwing up large number of unemployable youths; (vi) the products of the system show indifference, bordering on cynicism, towards higher social and cultural values.

REASONS OF SHORTFALL & REMEDIES

The reason for these deficiencies are not far to seek. To illustrate my point, let me concentrate, as mentioned earlier, on the spead of literacy and numeracy on the one hand, and on the strengthening of intitutions of higher learning on the other.

A CASE FOR FORMAL PRIMARY EDUCATION

Starting with literacy and numeracy, it needs to be reminded that whatever might be the merits of spreading adult literacy through informal methods, and they are numerous, the contribution to economic development by those who are mere literates is marginal. This is particularly so because the literacy in many cases is a transitory phase, and the "literates" who have minimum contact with the written word soon revert to the status of illiterates. The lack of attention to numeracy makes the efforts totally inadequate to the needs of the time.

A number of studies have shown that a minimum of four years of schooling is neeessary to enable a person to contribute to economic development in a perceptible manner. Similarly, the change in attitude towards family planning, child rearing etc. to the extent these are influenced by education, also require a minimum period of schooling. Our *priority*, therefore, should be the spread of *formal primary education* in rural areas, and particularly among women. As regards adult literacy, our emphasis should be on creating a *demand* for literacy, mobilising local resources not only for initial literacy drives, but also for continuing education and, giving equal importance to numeracy.

INVOLVING LOCAL PEOPLE & ACCOUNTABILITY

The second weakness which is clear to any observer of the educational scene is the non-involvement of local people in the field of primary education. Bureaucracy is certainly to be blamed for an attitude of superiority which they display vis-a-vis the village level institutions and people, and the manner in which they pre-empt the functions legitimately belonging to the people. Unfortunately, even the teachers, and others who are directly involved with the functioning of the educational system, also share these traits to a larger or smaller extent. They are hesitant to work with representatives of the people, especially at the lower level, and would not make any effort to involve latter in the activities of the educational institutions. The irresponsibility and ignorance of some of the local leaders cannot be wished away, but the remedy to that is not to deny them the responsibility which is legitimately theirs, but to equip them to face their responsibilities more adequately.

This brings me to another weakness which he have witnessed in our system, and that is the lack of accountability at all levels. Those who are entrusted with resources or given responsibility should also be expected to deliver the results. We do not have a system of monitoring to enable a timely detection of flaws and mid-season correction of deficiencies With advances in evaluation techniques and information technology, it should not be difficult to put in place such systems at all relevant points. This will also bring out in the open one of the other major defeets in our education system, namely, the lack of concern for cost effectiveness. The fact that we do not have systematic and rigourous studies of the costs and benefits of primary education at all-India level and for the States is indicative of the indifference towards the need to economise, an attitude which in a poor country cannot be justified.

SCHOOLS EQUIPPED FOR LOCAL SKILLS

Finally, it should be made clear that if primary education is to be made a contributory factor to economic growth, two things are important: (i) We will have to provide all households in the country access to a properly equipped primary school; it is largely done but there are still certain gaps, especially when it comes to the provision of teaehers and minimum necessary teaching aids; and (ii) The curriculm of the schools, especially at the primary level, should reflect the needs for skills and aptitudes which are relevant to particular local areas.

EDUCATION & HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE POOR

In the context of econmic growth, education is only one of the social services which contribute to

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Education— n Input to Development (*Contd.*)

human capital formation. Health and nutrition are other. In fact, all these services are mutually supportive and reinforcing. An important example is the access to nutritious food and its impact on education. The provision of mid-day meal and other food supplements to the children of the poor not only acts as incentive for bringing them to schools, but also helps them in developing their congnitive skills. Because of what is described as a "seamless web of inter-relationships", there is a need for coordination in the provision of education, health and nutrition. More so, if these services are oriented towards the poor.

HIGHER EDUCATION : CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE

The case of higher education, especially of the "centres of excellence" in science and technology, is another example of mixed results. India can still claim to have one of the largest pools of scientific manpower, not only among the developing world but throughout the world. The contributions made by the scientists in various scientific establishments in India are such as to make any Indian proud. At the same time, it is equally clear that there are some major difficulties faced by these institutions. The most important in my view is a lack of replicability, even extendability, of these institutions. There is an incestuous relationship among few institutions of the same genre in India, or these institutions and their counterparts abroad. They have hardly any interaction with their 'hinterland'. One of the objectives in setting up these centres of excellence was that they will radiate and influence other institutions of similar kind. This has not happened. So long as firm links are not established between institutions at different levels of development, it is futile to expect a "spread", or a "percolation" effect emanating from centres of excellence.

A CRISIS OF ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP

Finally, let me say a few words on academic leadership. Crisis of academic leadership is the biggest crisis facing the education system. Mainly because of the failure of leadership, there are very few institutions which could maintain their glory for more than a generation; others—even the very well-known ones—are resting on their past laurels. I personally think that among academics there, are still a number of very capable and dedicated persons who can lead the educational institutions at all levels. This does not sound convincing when we see the recent record of the academic institutions, which is far from satisfactory. The explanation lies basically in : (a) the right type of academics do not get selected for administrative tasks; (b) the persons selected do not get equipped to do the task efficiently; and (c) the absence of accountability leads to complacency or wilful default. All these lacunae can be overcome,

In the selection of personnel, one is not expecting anything more than a diligent search and a fair judgement. Once suitable candidates are identified, their capacity to fulfill the assigned tasks can, generally, be enhanced by systematic induction and proper training, a practice which seems to be totally alien to our education administration. Similarly, the norms of accountability relevant to different constituencies can be developed and the performance monitored. The overriding concern ought to be maintenance of quality and the starting point should be a faith in the teachers' capability to manage academic institutions. We have entrusted the management of academic institutions to the bureaucrats, but without any more edifying outcome. The latter have their own strengths, yet the nature of academic management is such that it is the "human touch" which matters the most, and in this respect, the teachers excel.

In this country, one can discern several positive features of the education system as it has evolved in recent years. If even then one sounds critical, rather desperate, it is because the challenges facing us are truly gigantic, and our expectations from the education system are commensurately large.

Dr. V.S. Vyas is Director, Institue of Development Studies, Jaipur, [This note was presented at the Round Table on Development & Education, Raj Bhavan Jaipur on 18th March 1991. Governors of Maharastra, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan were present besides about 50 educationsits and administrators from Rajasthan at this novel get-together.] □

BOOKS RECEIVED

From Abhinav Publications
E-37, Hauz Khas, New Delhi-110 016

R. C. Dutt : STATE ENTERPRISES IN A DEVELOPING COUNTRY—The Indian Experience '50-'90

Amitabha Mukherjee : TOWARDS A NON-STATIC THEORY OF PROFIT MAXIMIZATION

M/s. Rawat Publications
3-Na-20, Jawahar Nagar, Jaipur-302 004

Ramaswamy R. Iyer : A GRAMMAR OF PUBLIC ENTERPRISES

Dhirendra Vajpaye & R. Natarajan : TECHNOLOGY AND DEVELOPMENT

Rakesh Hooja : PLANNING, INTERLOCKED MARKETS AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Rakesh Hooja & P.C. Mathur (Ed.) : DISTRICT AND DECENTRALISED PLANNING

Ratna Sagar (P) Ltd.
Mukherjee Nagar Commercial Complex, Delhi-110009

Karan Singh : ESSAYS ON HINDUISM (1990 Edition)

Popular Prakashan Pvt. Ltd.
35-C, Pt. M. M. Malviya Marg, Bombay-400034

Sutinder Bhatia : BOKARO STEEL PLANT—Some Economic Aspects

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Kazi Nazrul Islam – A Rebel Poet

A Tribute by Dilip Chakraborty

Chronologically, the modern Bengali poetry is a post-World War phenomenon, and emotionally, it is anti-Tagore. Kazi Nazrul Islam was one of the triumvirate that unfurled the flag of modern Bengali poetry, the other two exponents being Subhas Mukherjee and Ghulam Kuddus, followed by a galaxy of luminaries—Jibananda Das, Sudhn Datta, Bishnu De, Amiya Chakraborty, Premen Mitra, Buddhadeb Bose and others.

BANKIM & TAGORE

The twentieth century brought about a qualitative change in the tone and texture of Bengali literature. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, the '*Sahitya Samrat*', who had dominated over the Bengali literature in the second half of the nineteenth century, passed away in 1875 A.D.; and with that the Bankim Era yielded place to the Rabindranath Tagore Era. Bankim had a subtle 'anti-muslim' feeling, his liberal attitude notwithstanding. But Tagore had no such feelings. Tagore was secular and had inherited all the basic tenets of Hinduism, though he was a life-long follower of 'Brahmo' Religion, an unorthodox and liberal brand of protestant—Hinduism. Tagore was a devout Hindu, but he was too liberal-minded to be opposed to any particular religion. He had transcended the religio-cultural and ethnic fabric of the society He was a *World Poet* in the true sense of the term. Tagore was also the literary 'Guru' of Nazrul Islam, though the latter often agreed to differ with him on many vital issues.

A NEW STAR IS BORN

Kazi Nazrul Islam was born in 1899 A.D., as if to ring out the nineteenth century and to ring in the twentieth. As the sun submerges all the stars in the day-sky, similarly Rabindranath Tagore eclipsed most of the other literary figures in the early twentieth century literary firmament of Bengal. Even the exponents of the modern Bengali poetry were no exception. Though they made a '*Jihad*' against the dominating influence of Tagore, they themselves were devotees of Tagore and were influenced by the latter beyond recognition. But Nazrul was a singular exception. Nazrul proved that to be an admirer of some colossal personality, one need not obliterate one's own identity.

BEYOND COMMUNITY : A VOICE OF THE O PRESSED

Nazrul Islam hated communalism, though he had a life-long concern for the well-being of the members of his community—not only his co-religionists, but, all the oppressed, exploited and down-trodden 'have-nots' of the society, irrespective of caste, creed and religion. To understand how Nazrul Islam addressed himself to the problem of communalism, it would help us to have an idea of the prevailing 'communal' attitudes of the leading figures of the then Bengal and as well as its common people. The much publicised Hindu-Muslim Divide in the early twentieth century Bengal was only skin-deep; and, thanks to the able leadership of secular political leaders like Janab Fazlul Haq, Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das and social reformers like Swami Vivekananda and others, the Muslim intelligentsia, like their Hindu brethren, were able to realize that the British were their 'prime' enemy. The partition of Bengal in 1905 went a long way in apparently cementing the bonds of Hindu-Muslim friendship. It was owing to the struggle of the Bengalees that the Royal Bengal Tiger could tame for a short while though, the British Lion, compelling the latter to unsettle "a settled fact", by re-uniting the partitioned Bengal.

EARLY FORMATIVE INFLUENCES

The ancestors of Nazrul Islam migrated to the western part of Bengal from neighbouring Bihar, and they had a long tradition of Sufi culture. In the formative years of his life, Nazrul came in intimate contact with Comrade Muzaffar Ahmed, the patriarch of the Indian Communist Movement. The influence of Muzaffar Ahmed on Nazrul Islam was life-long, and it helped Nazrul to transcend petty communal bias. The salutory influence of Rabindranath Tagore's rational humanism and of Satyan Datta's and Syed Wajed Ali's zealous patriotism helped Nazrul, in his formative years, to form a rational attitude towards the vexed issue of communalism,

His lesser exposure to the elite system of education and his greater exposure to the horrors of the war during his career in the army in India and abroad, enabled him to rise above petty considerations of caste, creed and religion.

Nazrul preached secularism and, unlike many politicians of the then India, he practised what he preached. Nazrul was a devout Muslim, but he had read more Hindu religious scriptures than many Hindus. He was woefully aware how the 'fundamentalists' and the 'vested itnerests' blew the Hindu-Muslim discord out of proportion to serve their parochial ends. Left to himself, he would have wished away all communal feelings, but it was easier said than done. He was disowned by many Muslims and ostracized by many Hindus, simply because he loved and married a Hindu girl, Pramila Sengupta. This couple braved all the odds and remained close to each other till death separated them.

THE REBEL POET

Though Nazrul Islam published three collections of short stories (*Byathar Dan*, *Rikter Bedan* and *Shiuli Mala*) and three novels (*Bandhan Hara*, *Mrityu Kshudha* and *Kuhelika*), he owes his fame to his large number of poems and songs. He is the rebel poet of Bengal; and in popularity, next only to Rabindranath Tagore.

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KAZI NAZRUL ISLAM

A VOICE OF THE OPPRESSED

Nazrul had a royal march straight into the heart of millions of Bengalees with the publication of his first major poem '*Bidrohi*' (the Rebel). In this poem, he gave a clarion call that made Bengalees 'in unvanquishable number' to 'awake out of their slumber'. The very opening lines of the poem suggest the mood of the poet when he sings—

Bala beer,
Bala unnata mama shir !
Shir nehari aamaari natashir oi shikhar Himadrir....

"Say, Oh Brave !
Say—My head is held high . . . !
And, seeing the high profile of my head
Even the peak of the mountain is dwarfed"....
(*Bidrohi*/Rebel)

We immediately get a glimpse of his secular nationalism when he poses this question in his poem *Kandari Hushiar* (Warning to the Boatman) :—

Asahaya jati marichhe dubia Janena santaran,
Kandari; aaji dekhibo tomar Matri-mukti pan.
Ora Hindu na Muslim, oi jijnashe konjan
Kandari, bala, dubichhe manush, santan mor maar. . .

"The wretched Nation is getting drowned.
It does not know how to swim.
Boatman, to-day is your test to deliver your
Holy Mother . . . !

"Are they Hindus or Muslims" who asks this question ?
Say, Boatman, say : They are children of my Mother".

The seminal idea is in the penultimate line :

Aji pariksha, Jaatir athaba Jater karibe tran . . .

"Today is your trying period, Boatman.
Whether you will rescue the Nation or the
Community" !

The poem entitled *Hindu-Muslim War* is a milestone. Only a genius of Nazrul's calibre could apparently make fun by treating in lighter vein the sombre and gory incidents of Hindu-Muslim riots, thereby arousing the conscience of the dehumanised criminals indulging in communal frenzy. He had the knack of transforming an apparent evil as harbinger of good. Like the nineteenth century English romantic poet, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Nazrul seemed to believe that destruction precedes construction. He opens the poem in a high pi(ch, singing :

"Cheer up, at long last, the soul of India is animated,
Cremetoria and Graveyards—with dead bodies
... ... inundated".
"Who kills whom—confusion is there, darkness not
dispelled
Darkness caused brother kill his brother...."

And finally he sounds prophetic when he says—

"The stick that today demolishes the Mosque Minar
and Temple Tower
Will definitely raze enemy fort to the ground tomorrow
....
If your tail has caught fire, let it burn Swarn Lanka".

FOR AMITY & HARMONY

The root cause of communal hatred, according to Nazrul Islam, was an ever-widening hiatus between the members of the two communities resulting in colossal ignorance of the one about the other. We may recall that Rabindranatn Tagore wrote in a similar vein in his *Letters from Russia*, when he opined that lack of proper education was one major factor of Hindu-Muslim confrontation.

In another poem, Nazrul Islam heralds Hindu-Muslim unity by singing—

"We, the Hindus and the Muslims
Are like two flowers on the same twig—
Muslim—its pearl-like Eye
And Hindu—The very Soul". . .

Nazrul was ruthless in condemning the self-appointed guardians of religions—Maulavis and Priests—for their unreligious activities. He sings—

"Common man has no entry into your Temples and Mosques/Your Maulavis and Priests have barred them from within".

Nazrul was pained to note the rampant distrust of the members of one community by the other community, though the two might have been living as neighbours for ages. Nazrul begins his short story '*Emperor of Genii*' thus :

. . . "Most of the inhabitants are Muslim peasants. In the one extreme corner of the village, live a few Kayasth families It seems that the Hindus have deliberately constructed their houses in the extreme corner as if to save themselves from the contamination (of the Muslims)".

Commenting on the communal carnage that engulfed Calcutta in April 1926, Gopal Halder in his book entitled *Kazi Nazrul Islam*, says : "This time a new dimension was added—that of cruelty and barbarism—to the communal clash . . . more harmful than the loss of life and property was the loss of faith between the Hindus and the Muslims. Mistrust was the breeding ground of this new phenomenon. Nazrul's pen waged a relentless struggle against this communal frenzy as singular motto of his life and literature."

SECULAR WRITINGS

Nazrul's literary works are secular. He composed songs of typical Hindu flavour—like *Shyama Sangeet*—devotional songs addressed to the Hindu Goddess of strength *Kali* or *Baishnav Geet*—devotional songs of the followers of the Hindu God of Maintenance *Vishnu*, as freely as he composed songs catering to the special religious taste of the Muslims. In selection of words, he picked words of Sanskrit origin as easily as words of Arabic and Persian origins. And by introducing *Ghazals* to the Begali literature, he broadened its scope

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—A REBEL POET

and parametres, over and above making it more human, more universal and, obviously more secular.

IMPOTENT WRATH OF A WOUNDED & CAGED LION

But Nazrul Islam had no consistent theory or solution for the eradication of the communal canker, his lifelong obsession for Hindu-Muslim unity notwithstanding The reasons are not far to seek, First, Nazrul was primarliy and basically a poet and not a social scientist; and the exploration of the evils of communalism was not his domain. Secondly, Nazrul was, by temperament, incapable of making a unidirectional and sustained effort to arrive at the root of something. His approach was subjective and his method—mateoric. Poetry of Nazrul Islam is a poetry of reverberations. In him, we hear the impotent wrath of a wounded and caged lion, which has more motion and less direction.

One is tempted to guess as to how this votary of Hindu-Muslim amity, Nazrul Islam, would have reacted to the Partition of India—the single most important phenomenon in the history of this sub-continent in this century. But we have no answer because, when India attained freedom at midmight of an august date in the month of August 1947, this mighty rebel poet of Bengal was mentally dead, though he was physically alive. He lived for long thirty years after India's Independence, but never regained his mental balance, lost in late forties. Nazrul Islam's swan song preceded Indian Independence.

In popularity Kazi Nazrul Islam is next only to Rabindranath Tagore among the Bengalis in West Bengal, Bangla Desh and elsewhere. As a rebal poet he surpassed all other Bengali poets—living or dead, in India or abroad He composed several thousand songs on various themes in various rhythms and rhyming pattems. These are very popular in Bengal.

May I end this piece with his poem "*Amar Kaifyat*" (My Answer) along with its English rendering

Elo Koti taka, elo na swaraj
Taka dite naare bhukhari samaj.
Maar buk hote chhele kede khaye
Moraa boli baagh Khao he Ghaash
Herinu Janani maagichhe bhiksha dheke rekhe ghare chheler taash.

Bandhugo, aar bolite paarina, bada bish Jwala ei buke,
Dekhia, shunia, Khepia giachi, tai Jahaa aashe Kai mukhe.

Rakta Jharate paarinaato eka,
Taai likhe Jai e rakta lekha.
Bada Katha, bada bhav, bandhu, aase nako bada dukhe,
Amar kaabyo tomora likhio. bandhu Jaahaaraa aachho sukhe.

Paroaa Karinaa baanchi ba naa baanchi, yuger hujug kete gele.
Maathaar opare jwalicchen Ravi, rayechhe sonar shata chhele.

Prathana karo, jara kedi khaye tetrish koti mukher graas
Yano lekhe haya amar rakta lekhaye
Taader sarbanaash, tader sarbanaash, tader sarbanaash.

"Crores of rupees were transacted
But independence did not meterialize.
The starving millions can ill-afford to make payment.
Sons are snatched away from mother's bosoms.
But we plead with the tiger to eat grass.
While we see bereaved mother is out
with begging bowl—
Leaving behind the dead body of her beloved son.

Friends, I can endure no more, my heart is venom-stung.
Seeing calamity all around, I have lost my mental poise
Hence I talk as frantically as it pleases me.

Since I cannot shed blood alone,
I simply write this blood-curdling page.
Let you people compose immoral songs
who are in perennial bliss.

I don't care whether I outlive or not the fad of the age
Rabi is shining overhead and thousand flowers are
around.

You all pray that all those who starve children
Let my blood write curse on them,curse on them,
curse on them.

Dr. Dilip Chakraborty is Head of the Deptt. of English, Chamria Post-Graduate College, Fatehpur-Shekhawati Rajasthan. □

Published works of Kazi Nazrul Islam

Collection of Short Stories : *Dyathaar Daan; Rikter Bedan; Shivli Male*

Novels : *Bandhan Hara; Mshudhe; Kuhelika*

Play : *Madhu Mala*

Collections of Poems and Songs : *Nazrul Gitika; Sanchitaa; Dolan Champaa; Hafeez; Geeti Shatadal; Sursaaki; Bulbul Ind; Bhangar Gaan; Chandra Bindu; Pralay Shikha; Shesh Savgat; Bisher Banshi; Nazrul Swaralipi; Sur Mukur; Sura Lipi; Nazrul Sura Sanchayan I; Nazrul Sura Sanchayan II; Jaban Bandi; Chokher Chaatak; Gaaner Maala Phani Manasa; Natun Chaand; Yuga Vaani; Aleya O Jhilmili; Agni Veena.*

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A SAINTLY SCHOLAR

A birthday tribute to the renowned scholar and educationist, Professor K. R. Srinivas Iyengar (who was be eighty-three on April 16)—

by V. V. B. Rama Rao

There were times when the words saint, scholar and perceptor were almost synonymous. The saint is one in quest of God; and the scholar, too, is one in quest to know the unknowable. Gnosis and praxis have come to be discovered as the noblest goals worthy of pursuit. The divine preceptor explains in the *Gita* the preoccupation of the devout in blissfully contemplating and then elucidating to each other the Almighty they experience and envisage :

Matchitta madgata pranaah bodhayanthi parasparam
Kadhayantaschamm nityam tushyanticha ramanticha.

SLOW RISE OF A *SAADHAKA*

Professor K R. Srinivasa Iyengar, the renowned scholar, is of the rare order of the saintly scholars of the yore, A hagiologist and a *drashtaa* (seer), an educationist and an educational administrator, a savant of letters and a religionist in the highest sense of the word, he is a veritable son of the goddess of learning. A persevering *saadhaka*, he rose to dazzling heights, surely but steadily He did not take the world by a tempestuous storm. He has been more like a tender breeze, a wisp of fragrance emanating from the ethereal regions.

A renowned scholar of the South, Dr. Srinivasa Iyengar had his early education at the government school, Kodaganallur, collegiate education at Hindu College, Tirunelveli, and St. Xavier's College, Palamkottah. He took his B.A., M.A., and D. Litt from Madras University more than five decades ago. Andhra University conferred D. Litt. on him *honoris causa* two decades ago.

Saint, scholar and preceptor are all one, for one implies the others too. Was'nt Adi Sankara all the three at the same time? Was'nt Vyasa, one still of the more ancient times, another as Valmiki? There was no knowing how long it took in their times to get known widely. But with certainty, we can say that Adi Sankara received the veneration and worship due to him in his own life time.

IN SEVERAL ROLES

In the case of Iyengar, with thousands of Masters of English Literature nurtured and shaped by him, the scholar quickly blossomed into a saint, and from thence to the position of an interpreter of the divine scriptures with modern sensibility. Professor Iyengar has had a long innings as a teacher of literature, for nearly four decades. Right from his thirties, he undertook the guidance of Ph. D. scholars in English, including American, Indo-Anglian and Commonwealth literatures. Besides being an inspiring teacher and held in great reverence by his students and colleagues, he had come to be associated with great organisations like the *Sahitya Academi* and *Shri Aurbindo Ashram* He was Vice-Chancellor of Andhra University, and member of the Board of the Governers of C.I.E.F.L. An ardent believer in the hoary traditions of Hinduism and exposed to the religions of the both the East and the West, he imbibed ripeness from the scriptures he ardently absorbed.

Professor Iyengar has to his credit several books, some of which have been epoch-making His work on Lytton Strachey has been adjudged the most perceptive. A staunch Aurobindoite, he has made significant contributions to Aurobindo studies. A connoisseur of literature and a preceptive literary critic, his essays in criticism and history of literature have become indispensible text-books for students. A top-ranking educationist, he believes in the basic values obtained in Dharmic tradition.

SITAAYANA—AN ENDURING CONTRIBUTION

His most significant and perhaps the most enduring contribution is his *Sitayana* : *the Epic of the Earth-born* (published in 1987) in the epic tradition of sage Vedavyasa and Muni Valmiki.

The distinguished seers and sages like Adi Sankara of the hoary past and stalwarts like Swami Vivekananda and Shri Aurobindo in more recent times inspired Professor Iyengar to leave his own footprints in the sands of time. *Sitayana* could well be the magnum opus of this illustrious savant. Our tradition has it that it is the duty of every worthy disciple to discharge the debt he owes to his preceptor—*rishiruna* Professor Iyengar has gone a step forward and transcreated Valmiki's epic, super-imposing on it a grand new experiment. Where the ancient Epic took ontological evil for granted and went about enunciating *Dharma* in poetically inspiring and moving ways, this modern epic by Iyengar, in tune with the typical modernist trend, makes it more diffuse to include the preoccupation with the whys and wherefores of evil. This enriches the epic with a mystique and a dialectic that has been central to the Christian epic. Evil is accounted for on an intellectual plane in the cogitations of the Mother, at once human and divine. *Sitayana* appeals to us as a plangent threnody celebrating the depth and comprehensive compassion of womanhood with a capacity to absorb and absolve. In a less deft hand, the shifted focus could have fallen down to the pedestrian level of a woman's-lib piece, but in the hands of a devout scholar, the work remains a worshipful kind of an exegesis of divine womanhood.

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MINIMISING RISKS OF NUCLEAR POWER TO MAXIMISE NETT BENEFITS.

Risks are part of our daily life. Occasional bursting of lpg gas cylinders, house collapse, electrocution, industrial and automobile accidents, train collisions, air crashes and failure of dams are some instances. Yet, because of the benefits obtained, man has learnt to accept these risks, by taking safety precautions. In fact, the science of safety aims to reduce risks to very low probabilities, but in real life zero risk situations do not exist. That's why, in every nuclear power plant, a maximum credible accident is postulated by designers and suitable engineering safeguards built in.

Risks at nuclear power plants are mainly due to radiation effects. It must, however, be emphasized at the outset, that *a nuclear reactor is not an atom bomb;* that the *level of radiation is very low;* and that *radiation-induced cancers and genetic defects form a very small fraction of those occuring naturally.*

For safety purposes, the effects of radiation are classified into two types :

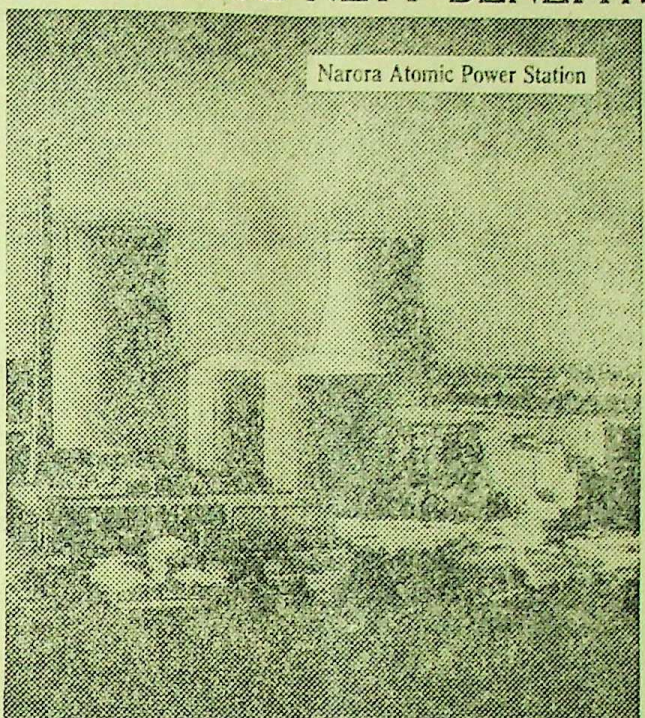
1. Probabilistic — affecting at random, not all, but only a few of the persons exposed. Cancer induction and genetic abnormalities belong to this category. However, these are controlled by limiting the level of radiation and the number of persons exposed.

2. Deterministic — affecting every person exposed, provided the exposure exceeds threshold level. Skin erythema and eye cataract belong to this type and are controlled by limiting the exposures to below threshold level.

Safety objectives are to prevent "core-melt" accident due to uncontrolled power excursion or loss of coolant (LOCA). And to maintain successive, multiple, physical barriers to prevent fall-out of fission products in the public domain.

Global safety record of nuclear power plants.

In operating about 430 civilian nuclear power plants over the last three decades, there have been just two reactor accidents. The Three Mile Island (TMI-2) in U.S.A., in March 1979 and the Chernobyl (Unit-4) in U.S.S.R., in April 1986. At TMI-2, it was LOCA, due to operating error, resulting in partial core-melt. There were no casualties nor radioactive fall-out in the public domain, because of containment building. At Chernobyl, it was the uncontrolled power excursion caused again, through an operating error, that of bypassing safety devices. All the thirty-one casualties were from the plant. Radioactive fission products had spread across national boundaries in Europe. Both the accidents were thoroughly investigated and the lessons learnt, conveyed to all 113 members of the IAEA. Except for these two mishaps, the overall safety record has been excellent.



Narora Atomic Power Station

Radiological Impact of Nuclear Power as compared to Medical & Natural Background Exposures.

Source	Present Annual Individual Dose (in millirem)		Collective Dose Commitments	
	Per Capita (World Population)	Typical (Exposed Individuals)	Million Man-rem	Equivalent years of background
Annual :			**Per Year of Practice**	
1. Natural Background	240	100-500	1100	1
2. Medical Exposure (Diagnostic)	40-100	10-1000	200-500	0.2-0.5
3. Occupational Exposure	0.2	50-500	1.0	0.001
4. Nuclear Power Production	0.02	0.1-10	0.1	0.0001
Single :			**Per Total Practice**	
a) All Test Explosions	1.0	1.0	500	0.5
b) Nuclear Accidents	—	—	60	0.06

Source: United Nations Scientific Committee on the effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR).

- Spontaneous annual incidence rate of cancer is about 600-800 per million population (0.06-0.08%). The contributing factors are tobacco 30%, food 33%, viral infection 10%, alcohol 4%, industrial occupation 4%, hereditary 2% and natural background radiation less than 0.5%.
- Spontaneous occurrence of inherited genetic diseases caused by mutations is about 10.7% in the population. Out of which, 7.6% is caused by environmental factors, smoking and food. And 0.1% is due to natural background radiation. Air pollution, viruses, alcohol and mutagenic chemicals also cause other genetic defects.
- Casualties at Chernobyl were thirty-one, as compared to 3000 in the Vaiont dam failure (1963) in Italy and another 3000 in the Morvi dam failure (1979) in India.

What then are the benefits obtained from nuclear power generation? From 1956 to 1987, global nuclear power contribution has been some 12000 Terra-Watt-hours of electricity. This has saved over 4400 million tonnes of coal or 2800 million tonnes of oil. Although this may be insignificant in comparison to the coal and oil resources available, its main contribution has been in reducing pollution considerably (10000 million tonnes of carbon dioxide, 200 million tonnes of acid gases, poisonous heavy metals and carcinogenic benzpyrene). Worldwide, more than 10000 lives have been saved from accident avoidance and over 2.5 million non fatal cases of injuries averted, which would otherwise have been the detriment, had 12000 TWhrs been produced from coal.

Indian experience and safety performance.

There have been no fatalities caused by radiation nor any significant occupational radiation injuries nor any detriment to the public or the environment at any of the Indian nuclear power plants, which have so far logged over 70 reactor-years. The reports of the TMI-2 and Chernobyl accidents were thoroughly reviewed and corrective measures incorporated in the design and operating procedures, wherever necessary. Constant alertness and vigilance to safeguard safety have long been pre-requisites of the safety culture, so essential, in operating nuclear powr plants.

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Neo Folklore of Our Time and Land

Vijay Mohan Sethi
MULK RAJ ANAND--The Short Story Writer
Ashish Publishing House, New Delhi (1991) Pp. 114.
Rs. 100/-

Review by Tripta Tandon

Despite shorter fiction being "one of the first loves", and his dexterity in handling the short-story form, Mulk Raj Anand has faced almost total neglect from the critics as a short-story writer. A look at the entire corpus of literary criticism reveals that the focal point of criticism to-date has been his novels. The reason for the bias against his shorter fiction, as Anand tells the author, is due to the public demand for a continuous narrative which results in a preference to novels over short stories.

Dr. Vijay Mohan Sethi's book exclusively on Mulk Raj Anand's short stories is a laudable attempt to bring out from the depth of anonymity, a short-story writer of great distinction. Scores of research papers and articles he has published to-date have all been presented in a book form which, in the words of Dr. Mulk Raj himself, is "the only thorough treatment beyond Dr. Melwani's long essay of many years ago, and Dr. M. K. Naik's introduction to *Selected Short Stories.*

EARLY LIFE & INFLUENCES

The present volume, consisting in part of Dr. Sethi's published essays, covers the entire range of Anand's short fiction in terms of its philosophical content and innovation technique. The book has three distinct divisions : (i) chapters dealing with Anand's dominant thematic concerns, (ii) chapters dealing with the technique of story-writing (iii) chapters that provide still deeper insight into his short stories being in the nature of personal encounters, and an interview with the writer.

The first chapter, "The Formative Years", sums up beautifully the life story of Dr. Anand and his growth as a writer. Dr. Sethi begins by taking into account the first few formative years of Anand's life *viz.* his early life, his love for the short story even in his early childhood,his education in the Khalsa College,Amritsar, his traumatic experience of the police cruelty during the dark days of imperial hegemony, and the impression of Dr. Iqbal on him, under whose influence he himself composed a few poems. The present volume also highlights other influences that have a bearing on his stories *e.g.* his study of European culture and tradition; his experiences in London which sharpened his political insight; the realization of the importance of dignity of labour and the solidification of his faith in the individual and the democratic values. Besides Marx, the influence of Tolstoy and Gorky is also discernible on Anand's shorter fiction. The critic also gives a graphic account of Anand's conversion to truthfulness and sincerity at Mahatma Gandhi's *Ashram.*

THEMES : WOMEN IN SUFFERING

After enumerating all the influences that have contributed to his growth as a story writer, the author attempts a critical evaluation of Anand's stories on the basis of their themes.

As 'woman' occupies a central place in Anand's treatment of characters, Dr. Sethi takes up all those stories which have women for their theme. In 'Mulk Raj Anand and Silent Sufferers', he critically examines all these stories in which Anand is chiefly concerned with the heroine's destiny, in stories entitled 'Lajwanti', 'Naina', 'Between Tears and Laughter', 'On the Border', 'Birth', 'Lullaby' and 'A Dark Night'. He attributes the cause of woman's suffering to poverty, greed and illiteracy. The rigidity of man-woman relationship and the degradation to which the Indian woman has fallen a prey, have also been discussed. He, however, recognizes and appreciates Anand's effort to restore the lost glory of the Indian woman.

. . . & MEN IN THEIR PREDICAMENTS

'Man's Predicament', on the other hand, deals with the problems faced by men in the world of Anand's fiction. Dr. Sethi's study reveals that men suffer mainly on account of mechanisation and the forces of modernity working on their rural sensibility. He again critically analyses some of Anand's stories *viz.* 'A Rumour','Old Bapu', 'The Man Whose Name Did Not Appear in the Census' and 'A Lament on the Death of a Master of Arts'. Most of the problems of men are the outcome of the growing industrialisation in towns and cities, which has rendered most of the villagers unemployed. Their search for jobs in towns makes them easy victims of the growing industrialism. The damaging effect of the faulty texture of education aggravates men's sufferings and leads to the erosion of their finer sensibilities. It hampers their growth and leaves them with a sense of failure in life.

ANAND'S TECHNIQUE & STOCK-IN-TRADE

However, the chapters dealing with Anand's technique of story-writing are particularly perceptive. Probing into the writer's past, Dr. Sethi discovers that the combined characteristics of the folk-tale and the fable form became Anand's stock-in-trade for building up his short stories. Though Anand had to change their form to suit modern sensibility,he retained several of the characteristics as also their verve and vitality.

FOLKLORE, LYRICISM & PSYCHOLOGY

In the chapter 'The Neo-Folk', Dr. Sethi explains how Anand endeavours to seek in the folklore the the answers to the questions of human predicament arising, for example, from a rigid pattern of relationsips, widowhood, casteism, classism, faulty texture of education and man's petty foibles. Observing utmost frugality in the use of action, Anand follows the pattern of the folklore to build up the plots of his own stories. The author examines several of Anand's

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Mulk Raj Anand — The Short-Story Writer

short stories ('The Barbers Trade Union', 'The Price Bananas', 'A Cock and Bull Story' and 'Lottery' etc) to show how the writer has made use of the folk form in one way or the other. His fables 'The Butterfly' and 'The Eagles and Pigeons' have been modelled on the *Panchatantra.*

Another significant observation made by Dr. Sethi pertains to Anand's use of lyricism in his short stories. 'The Lost Child', besides being a well-known allegory, is a fine example of lyricism. Likewise, his 'Butterfly' and' The Village Idyll' are brilliant illustrations of lyricism.

Psychology too is Anand's forte. His stories 'The Tamarind Tree', 'The Silver Bangles' and 'The Thief' manifest the writer's deep insight into human psychology. The facial expressions, thoughts and speeches of the characters go a long way into the probing of their mind. Like in many other stories, in' The Terrorist' and 'Babu Bulaki Ram' also, Anand reveals certain psychological tendencies generated in his characters by jealousy, fear, desire for fame, infatuation etc.

Dr. Sethi's conclusion is that "Catering to the needs of the modern reader,Anand replaces didacticism and allegory by lyricism and generalisation of universal truths" He creates a new kind of fable "which extends the old Indian story form into the modern age."

PIDGIN *Vs.* PIGEON ENGLISH

An obvious reason why Anand chose to write in English was his proficiency in the language. The chapter 'Pigeon-Indian' highlights Anand's contribution in the field of language. Besides being aggressive in the use of Punjabi English, Anand often breaks the rules governing the usage of standard English. Many times he indulges in literal translation of words and phrases, distorts the spellings of English words and resorts to 'nativization' of the Indian sensibility. He, however, differentiates the spoken English in India from "the imaginative use of the same language in the hands of creative writers in Indian English" To the former, he gives the name '*Pidgin English*' and the latter, '*Pigeon-Indian*'. As "Pigeon-Indian has the pull of our mother tongue, with 'a heavy sugar-coating of ordinary English words", it conveys the Indian sensbility rather efficiently.

The author furnishes illustrations from Anand's first novel *Untouchable* and the story 'The Parrot in the Cage,' to explain how the emotional stress is translated from the felt experience of the Punjabi into English language. Dr. Sethi also details other devices *viz.* 'Synthetic speech', 'explanatory glosses', 'hybridization' etc. that go into the making of Anand's Indian-English. Also furnishing the objections to the literal translation of the dialogue from the original Indian lauguage into English by the critics like Meenakshi Mukherji, K.R.S. Iyengar and V.Y. Kantak, Dr. Sethi sums up the study by commenting that these translations "are perfectly at home for a reader of the region who never takes them literally. They rather reflect the life in the country faithfully and sincerely".

INTERVIEW : WHAT IS COMPASSION ?

The last two chapters of the book, presenting the writer's personal encounter with Anand and his interview with him provide still deeper insight into Anand's short stories. 'A Lesson in Compassion' highlights the simplicity, humanness, sense of humour and the unassuming bearing of Dr Anand. The definition he gives to Dr. Sethi of 'compassion' is somewhat unconventional but convincing. Anand states : "Compession is not just a feeling of sentimental pity, but total understanding of a situation. Something that makes you understand why a thief steals, a robber robs and a vamp trades in flesh".

Dr. Sethi's interview with Mulk Raj Anand is aimed at making a surgical analysis of Anand's shorter fiction, his beliefs and his philosophy. Like the questions which are penetrating, the answers are elaborate, revealing and convincing. In answer to Dr. Sethi's attack on his Indian English, Anand replies that "The character cannot live in any language, either Dogri or Pahari or Punjabi or English unless her voice/his voice is transcreated or trans-literated. And that voice is not often recreated from the speech of one language into another language. Therefore, the Punjabi cannot be translated without the literal translation into English".

In reply to yet another question as to how can the language of a segregated segment of society penetrate into Indian sensibility, Anand states that after his conversion at Gandhi's Ashram, he learnt "to put into the mouths of his characters the words which they themselves use in their day-to-day life. Their real words are trans-literated and, therefore, they retain their ingenuity and appeal."

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Mulk Raj Anand—The Short Story Writer is important from yet another point of view. Appended to the book is a twenty-page select bibliography which, besides Anand's own, enlists all books of criticism on his works to date. This will be quite useful for those who take up Anand's shorter fiction for their perceptions. In being a judicious combination of Anand's criticism and biography, the present study adds significant dimensions to Anand's criticism. It urges the reader to think afresh and prepares him, her for a fuller and better understanding of Anand's shorter fiction.

Prof. Tripta Tandon is on the teaching faculty, Dept. of English, Govt. Post-graduate College, Dharamshala (HP).

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WORKING CLASS IN COLONIAL INDIA

S. D. Punekar and R. Varickayil (Ed.) : LABOUR MOVEMENT IN INDIA : Documents 1891-1917(Vol.II)

Indian Council of Historical Research, New Delhi (Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1990). Pp. xix+375, Rs. 300.

Reviewed by Farhat Hasan

Labour history in India has not been paid the kind of attention it deserves. Unlike England and other West European countries, the working class in India did not function under the hegemonic influence of the capitalist form of production. Its "experience", therefore, was far different from that of the workers in Europe, constrained as it persistently was by the prevalence of pre-capitalist relationships. An added factor making for the relative novelty of its experience, when compared with the working classes of Western Europe, was the colonial context.

While one may disagree with much of the thesis of Rosa Luxemburg, there is some truth in her argument that the relative prosperity of the English working class, after about the second half of the nineteenth century, was a function of great exploitation of the workers in the colonies. The struggle of the Indian working class, therefore, was two-fold : one against the colonial state and the other against their capitalist employers (both Indian and foreign). Developing from the, extreme burdens of the dual exploitation of the state and the capitalists, the labour movements in India, though nowhere quite as remarkable as those in Western Europe and Russia, nevertheless remain noteworthy and exemplary.

The proposed project of the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR, New Delhi), of which the present volume is part, to compile a "**Source Book of Labour Movement in India**", in eighteen volumes, is indeed to be welcomed and commended.

LABOUR IN KEY INDUSTRIES

The volume under review presents the documents that concern the Indian workers from 1891 to 1917. It is arranged in five sections. The first section is introductory, and contains sections from the *Imperial Gazetteer of India* that concern the basic industries of of the period, *viz.* the cotton, jute and silk industries, paper-making and printing. In addition, the section has two interesting documents from the *Indian Textile Journal* which discuss the problem of the supply of labour to the mills in Bengal and Bombay, and provide some quantitative details on the workers employed in these mills. These should be of interest to scholars interested in the problem of the sectorial as well as goegraphical mobility of labour and other similar questions concerning the composition of the working class.

THREE POINTS TO PONDER

Three significant, though not entirely unknown, points emerge from these documents. One, that the work force to the mills in Bombay and Bengal, did not come from nearby districts alone, but from long distances as well. Yet, and this is the second point, the workers retained strong connections with their native villages, causing seasonal scarcity of labour in the factories, during the cropping and harvesting periods. The third important point concerned with the cotton mills of Bombay, is that the growth of the spinning and weaving sectors was lop-sided, the latter growing at a much faster rate than the former, reflective of greater British competition in the spinning than in the weaving sector.

APPALLING CONDITIONS OF WORK

Sections II to V of the book have documents on the condition of the working class. These provide details on wages, working hours, problems of housing and sanitation and on working conditions in factories. It would have made the volume more useful had the editors made some attempt to relate the figures on wages with the cost of living, or at least with the prices of wheat and rice. By and large, the more interesting among the documents in these sections, are those that have been taken from the various Industrial Labour Commission Reports. Even though in these reports great care is taken to record the views of a cross section of the people—the managers, the mill-owners, the doctors, the sanitary inspectors, workers of both sexes and children—the appalling conditions of the Indian workers are quite conspicuously evident.

Even by the accounts of those who were least sympathetic to the cause of workers, as for example the managers and mill-owners, it is admitted that the workers had to work for a minimum of twelve hours on wages as low as Rs. 5 to 7 per month, children being paid just half; and that they lived in hovels wilh no sanitary and ventilation facilities. The actual condition of the workers was really even worse. In a note of dissent to the Labour Commission of 1875, T. M. Nair had this to say on the working hours of the labour-hands : "We have had ample evidence to prove that long hours are worked periodically in several of the industries in India. We have seen that operatives in ginning factories have had occasions to work 17 and 18 hours a day. In rice mills and flour mills, men have occasionally to work 2 · or 22 hours. In the printing presses, men have had to work for 22 hours a day for seven consecutive days". (*p 42*).

On their housing, a report of 1913 says, "Men, women and children were living in crowds in smoke blackened chambers without ventilation, without chimneys and almost no light". (*p. 151*). And the rents of these hovels, "certainly unfit for habitation", so we are told from the Industrial Commission Report of 1918, varied from Rs. 3 to 7 per month (*p. 155*), amounting to a little less than the whole of the monthly earning of the workers.

Let it also not be forgotten here that it were only luckier ones who could afford an accomodation, however miserable it might have been; the vast majority of

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BETWEEN APPEARANCES & REALITY

R. K. Srivastava : MASKS AND MEN
Writers' Workshop, Calcutta, (1986) p.p. 107, Rs. 40/- & Rs. 60/-

Comments by Karnail Singh

Masks and Men was the third volume of Dr. R. K. Srivastava's short stories, in which the author tried to put up fresh perspectives on the myth of modernity. Its paradigms were inter alia, sex and money. In the total pattern of his work, the author has encoded linguistic and anthropoligical structures. The sign ('masks'), as inscribed in the title of the book, has about it neither the shad : of Yeats's mask, nor Keats's 'negative capability.' Rather, its connotation is predicated on the conflict betweed appearance and reality. What the author seems to be encoding in the texture of his *oeuvre* is that simulation/dissimulation is practised by almost everybody in his/her life from day to day.

In "Friendship Love and Marriage", the opening epithet 'lonely' is a sensitive point, say, a simple operator to initiate the discourse. At once, it reveals the psychic state of Chaturvedi. The first layer of the discourse constitutes his dialling the number of Grace H. Smith. In the second layer, the reader is introdueed to Loveleen. The sign 'Maharaja' employed by Chaturvedi casually pushes forward the action of the narrative and connects the two lovers, culminating in Loveleen's 'passionate kiss' and their physical union. Loveleen's utterance : 'I am conceived.' *(p 24)* unfolds cultural ambiguities of the sign 'Maharaja'. Its denotation and connotation pull the discourse in diametrically opposite directions, bumping into cacaphony emanating from the dialling of Loveleen's number at the end and the breaking of the marble image of Venus into pieces.

In 'Rescuers', the socio-economic code initiates the action. Soon it is subrogated by the religious code. Majid Khan, Harcharan Singh, Ram Bharose Lal and Father Joseph Salt are Muslim, Sikh, Hindu and Christian respectively. The Father rescues Neeru from the 'rescuers' and seems her good angel, at first, but when he undresses himself completely and the 'deed' is done, the signifier 'rescuers' sounds like its own antithesis. The ironic code does its work ingeniously. The sequential schema shatters Neeru's father-fixation. She knifes the Father to death. The code of passion renders the discourse a stereotype, *albeit* it homogenises, clarifies and ensures the message.

In 'Confession', the discourse proceeds from the sign 'barrenness' predicating Lajwati, but it is inverted into a myth of fertility. 'Pumpkins and papayas' *(p. 45)* constitute the symbolic code, and lend themslves to enrich the significance of the narrative. The problematic is pushed forward through the mediation of Dhania. That 'Lajwati lay with Kewal Singh...Her bare buxom body glistened. . .The rain pattered on their bodies. . . It was an ecstatic experience. . . ." postulate proairetic and semic codes. The last two paragraphs of the discourse are additive and quasi-apologetic The lexias and metonymic aexpressions, 'The deafening peal of thunder,' 'A big gust of wind blew the wick lamp out'. . .(and so on) seem to be puncturing the discourse for an asemic word, a pure signifier which reverts to hysterical rambling, say, the absence of a set code in the end disintellectualised the message.

'Lasting Victory' is a socio-cultural discourse inscribed with economic, sexual and moral codes. Vimmi is the actant. Her choice and apprehensions in an Oedipal society, and her insistence, at the end of the discourse, to burn the bus and herself, if Gurmel—no matter that he has tried to attempt at her honour—is not released, problematises the narrative which is otherwise syntagmatic. The reader begins to see her in a new perspective *albeit* the discourse becomes mecha-

(overleaf)

Working Class in Colonial India *(Contd)*

the workers had the streets, the pavements or the lawns of the factories as their homes.

LOW WAGES & CHEAP LABOUR

The effect of these appalling conditions on the health of the workers is well highlighted in some of the documents. Also evident, from the interviews of the workers and labouring children recorded by the Commissioner, is the fact of widespread insecurity of jobs among the workers, owing to the abundance of cheap labour. This, of course, stands as one major explanations to their low wages and lack of concerted action during the period.

LABOUR MOVEMENT : EARLY PHASE

Seetion V under the heading "Labour Movement", has reports from newspapers, journals and commissions on the strikes and agitations that occured between 1871 and 1917. The grievances of the workers mostly centred on wages. Here one notices the development of some 'organisation' among workers though this had, as yet, not taken the form of a trade union. The greater part of the documents in this section deal with the mill strikes in Bombay.

The selection of the documents, their arrangement and classification is appropiate and useful. However, there are several important documents that need to have been included. Specially conspicuous is the ommision of certain documents found in the *Annual Reports of the Bombay Millowners' Association.*—(a source that has. presumably, not been consulted by the editors). The absence of a critical note on the sources, either in the introduction or elsewhere in the book is another shortcoming that would help the reader in arriving at a relatively objective understanding of the evidence. These minor failings apart, the editors have done a commendable work. The printing is also excellent.

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nical. The sexual code intended to be a catalyser tends to become the nucleus, and the moral code which is no more than a catalyser does violence to the polysemy of the the text. Unlike Neeru, the schizoid in Vimmi relapses into a paranoid—of course, a sublimated one.

'*Masks and Men*', after which the book has been entitled problematises the binary opposition in the psyche of Dhanik Lal and is aimed at exploring the arbitrary nature of the sign ('masks') which, in a way, is the nucleus of the semiotic pattern of the discourse. The economic code (the poverty of Sudama and Madhurima rebuffed by the friendly code) hitches back to the economic once again. Sudama and Madhurima wear masks to keep their pot boiling. Simultaneously the beauty of Madhurima ruptures the mask of Dhanik Lal. The code of passion ascends to the ironic when Sudama appears on the scene. The ritual of burning the cheque for Rs. 2000/- by Madhurima reminds the reader of the condemnation of Mammon to infernal fire and symbolises revindication of prelapsarian values in Benthamite civilisation. Say, the moral and symbolic codes join hands in the last block of the pattern of the discourse and complete its functional totality in a way, a detotalization of the code of bourgeois society.

The tacit protest inscribed in 'Masks and Men' tends to become a discourse of feminism in 'New Generation'. The syntagmatic pattern of the discourse is initiated and homogenised with quite a few spectacular signifiers with a view to building up the image of the modern girl. ("Long, unbraided, messy hair, her road-sweeping, broad-belted bell-bottoms her bra-less shirt..."). The rhetorical flourishes in the second paragraph are in the nature of discursivity connected to the semic code inscribed in the text.

Yadavendra, is a male-counterpart of the modern girl. His hospitalisation and affair with Deepka constitute the second layer of the narrative and establish the praxis of his life-style—a proairetic code that pushes the discourse forward. When Jyotsna refuses to accept Yadavendra as her husband, the spectacular signifiers introduced in the opening paragraph connoting a wanton begin in fumble in the texture and take upon them a different significance. Jyotsna's utterance: "For me, taking seven rounds of the fire, chanting of a few *mantras* . . . do not matter", raises the repressive discourse characterising the life-style of Ranjna and Deepka into a radical statement.

'Seeds of Democracy' is a discourse of power. Its paradigms are feudalism and democracy. The binary opposition between the propertied (Lokendra Singh) and the propertyless (Prabhua) surfaces in the discourse. The politico-economic code shuttles through the texture of the narrative, It seems to signify that no change in the political set-up can displace the social status of the propertied like Lokendra Singh, nor can it ameliorate the lot of the propertyless like Prabhua. The punchline: 'Whatever the members of the panchayat decide. . . I will accept", is a parasite on the tyrannised sign (Prabhua) violently yoked in the verbal gestalt.

'Road to Prosperity' is another discourse of power. Mahipal Das is more active than Prabhua, and Kaiso Singh is a little less crooked than Lokendra Singh. Whereas Prabhua comes to be a pathetic figure at the end of 'Seeds of Democracy', Mahipal Das feels elated after having built the road to the city. Nevertheless, the structure of the discourse is flawed for the several codes such as the political: ('Mahipal Das's defeat . . . in the panchayat election') *(p. 31)*; the economic: ('Their mangoes fed the animals') *(p. 32)*; the hermenutic: ('New Delhi and Bombay (are) like prostitutes with heavy make-up') *(p. 32)* and the proairetic ('Mahipal Das is thrown into the canal') remain diffident. The text is neither readerly (reductive) nor writerly (a complex pattern). Let us say, the signs inscribed in it are in quest of the author. The punchline: ('That is the price a village has to pay if it wants to be prosperous') *(p.41)* does not come to be an ironic reversal of the verbal gestalt inscribed with different codes. Rather it remains something mechanical.

To be sure, Srivastava is at his best in enacting a scene of coition ('Friendship, Love and Marriage' and 'Confession') or one approximating and nuancing it ('Rescuers', 'New Generation', 'Lasting Victory' and 'Masks and Men'). May be, he recurs to the phallic code to outlive it, or may be to cater for the bourgeois or petty-bourgeois taste. Occasionally, it tends to become an end *per se* and begins to command the signifiers to say yes to it. ('Lajvati lay with Kewal Singh . . .') *(p. 47)*. The syntagmatic segments of the verbal gestalt get listless about the message for it is already out there. ('Rescuers).

In the discourse of power, such as 'Road to Prosperity' and 'Seeds of Democracy', Srivastava gets unwary of the nucleus of the structure. The discourse remains no more than a string of codes than a patterned whole. Occasionally, the verbal icons come forward willingly to be fitted into the framework of the discourse, but the artist in Srivastava gets drowsy and the man intrudes upon the operating signifiers. His presence is so very comforting that the discourse refuses to move ahead like a favourite child, but his absence proves to be more comforting for the reader who feels free to trace, erase or retrace the signifiers in order to get to their bottom.

With Dr. Srivastava, sex is a much favoured topos, in striking contrast to Freud with whom it is a whole way of life. The former recurs to it time and again to fathom its depth more vigorously and pattern it more ingeniously.

In an interview with the editor of the *Paris Review* once T.S. Eliot said: "The difficulty with the modern writer is that he has not much to say and whatever little he has, he says it again and again". Repetition may look like stasis in the artistic development of a writer, but a visionary can dream of pastures new. The artist in Dr. Srivastava, I think, may be shy of that.

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CHANGING STATUS OF INDIAN WOMEN

R. K. Sapru (Editor)
WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT
Ashish Publishing House, New Delhi (1989) Rs. 300/-

Review by Raj Bala

The book *'Women and Development'* is a collection of twenty-eight research papers and articles. It makes a multidisciplinary investigation into some of the pressing socio-economic problems faced by women in India. The main contributors in this book belong to diverse professions and disciplines like public administration, political science, sociology, home science, medical science, psychology and law.

Every research paper or article is an independent one and the editor has failed to put them into a logical sequence or group. For example, there are several articles on the status of women—one is dealing with determinants of women status, another with rural status of women, whereas another is on the impact of urbanisation on women status, and so on. The reading of the book would have become more pleasant if such articles were put together and in a sequence.

COURT JUDGEMENTS & LEGISLATIVE MEASURES

Bansal has highlighted some of the leading judgements by Indian courts in favour of women on grounds of employment, equality and economic security. The active and enlightened citizens have to work together to fight against the social and economic exploitation of women. Jain, in his article on legislative measures, has listed the various pre- and post-independence legislations which are related to Indian women.

THREEFOLD HEALTH STRATEGY

Kothari and Samuel in their separate articles on women health have emphasised the three-fold strategy of education, employment and health for Indian women and the significance of population education among them. A new area of 'folk medicine' and its significance has been dealt with by Sridevi.

WOMEN'S SHARE IN WORK & IN POWER

Sethi has made a study on primary based data of three districts of Himachal Pradesh on the status and 'power' of rural women. Women perform 75 per cent of agricultural work; in addition, 95 percent of the work related to animal husbandry is also performed by women and lastly, the burden of house work is borne totally by women in the household. However, the major decisions of investment and expenditure of household income are guided and controlled by men.

The low status of women has been further re-affirmed in Rahman and Sarkar's article related to Bangladeshi women's status and role.

Gill has studied two villages near the cities of Ludhiana and Chandigarh to analyse the impact of urbanisation on women status. He found some positive impact on the attitudes of villagers toward women education, employment and other aspects.

Singharoy has analysed the impact of agricultural change on women work force in Panpara and Gafanagar villages of West Bengal. He concludes that in subsistence agricultural areas, the female agricultural workers have not changed much in their activities. But in the villages where modern techniques of agriculture production are used, the female workers have acquired heterogenity in their occupations.

DEVELOPMENT & WOMEN

Pinto and Mahajan, in their respective articles, have given a temporal perspective on the women's development and its programme in plan period.

The social structure, position of ageing women, and domestic women workers are three research papers, which have been based on case studies and secondary data.

ICDS Project organisation and the satisfaction level of its workers is worked out by Rattan, whereas Indirabai has explained the role of ICDS Projects in women's development.

Status of women is further highlighted in the Population Crisis Committee paper. Sapru has listed some of the determinants for women's development. Paranjape has analysed the education status of women in India.

Psycho-social perspective of women development by Vidhu Mohan, the women in organisation by Sabborwal and the working women's problems by Bhat are three other articles which provide insights into weaknesses and constraints of Indian women.

Here is a rich and varied collection of articles. However, the quality of the book would have improved if repetition could be avoided, especially in the articles related with women legislations, ICDS programme and the status of women.

A collection of many field-based investigations, another strength of the book is that it provides reflection of different scientists and researchers' view-point on the same issue with different angles.

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How Rama Came to be Deified

B. H.

THE AVTARAS OF VISHNU

An important feature of the Bhâgavata religion in the Gupta age (of which Emperor Chandragupta II was a devout follower, while king Samudragupta had adopted the emblem of Garudadhvaja) was the popular worship of the *Avataars*, *i.e.* Descents or Incarnations of Vishnu. Epigraphic and literary records of the period throw light on the evolution of the theory of *Avataara*, the germ of which is, however, to be traced in the later Vedic literature. (For which we may also refer to the various/relevant *Purânas*.)

VAAMAN & VARAAH, MATSYA & KURMA

The conception of the Vâmana (Dwarf) *avatâra* associated with Vishnu, and that of the Varaha (Boar), Matsya (Fish) and Kurma (Tortoise)-*avataras* not yet connected with that god—are to be found in the *Stapatha* and other *Brahmanas*. In the *Satapatha Brahmana* is a story of a contest between gods and Asuras for the place of sacrifice; the Asuras agreed to give land equal to the size of the drawf; when the drawf Vishnu was made to lie down, he grew so large as to encompass the whole earth, which then passed into the hands of gods. According to the same source, "having assumed the form of a tortoise, Prajapati created offspring" and "in the form of a boar, he (Prajapati) raised the earth from the bottom of the ocean."

In the *Taittiriya Âranyaka*, the earth is said to have been raised from the waters by a black boar with a hundred arms. This work also alludes to the Nrisimha or Man-Lion.

In the story of the Great Deluge in the *Satpatha Brahmana*, the Fish that towed Manu's vessel to safety was the incarnation of Prajapati Brahman This is sometimes supported by the epics and Puranic literature Later mythology, however, transferred the functions of the Boar, Fish, and Tortoise from Prajapiti Brahman to Vishnu as the most benevolent of the gods.

The *Gita* and some other sections of the *Mahabharata* represent Vishnu as an ideal divinity and an almighty saviour of mankind who incarnates himself from time to time in human or animal form uphold moral goodness and righteousness in the world.

IN THE *MAHABHARAT* & OTHER TEXTS— LIST GROWS TO TEN

But the theory of *avatâras* presents only a stage of development in the *Mahabharata*, the earlier sections of the epic do not contain any list of incarnations. The *avatâra* theory apparently underwent several stages of evolution. It seems to be based on old tales of strange animals with mysterious powers of assistance; though many of them had originally nothing to do with Vishnu. (The Buddhist conception of the Pratyeka-Buddhas might have influenced the develoment of the theory.) Traditions regarding the number of *avatâras* also varied, and the later lists of the ten *avataras*, sometimes adhered to, very often give their different names.

In a passage of the late Nârâyaniya section of the *Mahâbhârata*, mention is made only of four *avatâras*, *viz.* Boar, Dwarf, Man-Lion and Man (Vasudeva-Krishna). In another passage of the same section, the deified beings, Râma Bhârgava and Râma Dasarathi, are added making a total list of six *avataras*, while a third passage gives the list of ten incarnations, by adding Hamsa, Kûrma, Matsya and Kalki (Kalkin) to the above six.

According to the *Matsya Purâna*, which also gives a list of ten incarnations, there were three divine *avatâras*, *viz.* Narayana, Narasimha, and Vâmana, as well as seven human *avatâras*, *viz.* Dattâtreya, Mândhâtri, Râma son of Jamadagni, Râma son of Dasaratha, Vedavyâsa, Buddha, and Kalki.

In the *Vâyu Purâna*, there is a substitution of Krishna for Buddha.

HARIVAMSA

The *Harivamsa* gives a list of ten incarnations which omits Matsya, Kûrma, one of the Râmas, and Buddha, but adds Lotus, Datta (Dattâtreya), Kesava, and Vyasa. In the *Bhâgavata Purâna*, there are three lists of the *avataras*, but they do not agree with one another. According to one list, the incarnations are really innumerable (c. f. *avatara* theory of the *Gita*); it mentions no less than 24 *avatâras*.

The *Ahirbudhnya Samhita*, probably assignable to a date earlier than the eighth century, speaks of 39 *vibhavas* (manifestations) of the Supreme Being.

Other Pâncharâtra works like the *Vishvaksena-samhita* mention Buddha, Arjuna and others in the list of secondary *avatâras*.

Buddha is recognised as an *avatâra* in the *Dasavatâra-chaitra* of the Kashmir author, Kshemendra (c. A.D. 1050), and the *Gitagovinda* of Jayadeva (c. A D. 1200) of eastern India.

Jayadeva sings in praise of Krishna who is Vishnu himself, and of his ten *avatâras viz.* Fish Tortoise, Boar, Man-Lion, Dwarf, Râma Bhargava, Râma Dasarathi, Râma Haladhara, Buddha and Kalki.

The same names are found in a well-known Puranic verse enumerating the ten *avatâras*, which is

(*Continued*)

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A GLIMPSE OF RELIGIOUS FERVOUR IN THE AGE OF GUPTAS

quoted in a Mamallapurana (near Madras) inscription of about the eighth century A D. The Belâva Grant (c. A.D. 1125) refers to Krishna as a "partial incarnation" of Hari.

The worship of some of the *avatāras* is amply attested to by the Indian epigraphic records of the period between the fourth and the eighth century A.D.

PARASURAMA

The early worship of Parasurāma in western India is indicated on an inscription of the second century A.D., although his conception as an *avatara* of Vishnu might not have been so early. The Nasik inscription of Saka Rishabhadatta (A. D. 119-24) speaks of the Rāmatirtha, known in the *Mahabharata* as the holy abode of Rama, son of Jamadagani, and situated in the suburbs of Sūrpāraka not far to the north of modern Bombay. The usual belief that the worship of Dasarathi Rama was not popular in the Gupta Age seems to be wrong. It has to be remembered in connection with the *Avatara* theory that the deification and worship of the incarnations are earlier than their indentificatian with Vishnu.

RAMA

The poet Kālidāsa (c. A.D. 400) describes in the *Raghuvamsa*, canto X, how Vishnu, lying on the great serpent in the ocean of milk, with Lakshmi rubbing his feet, was born as Dasaratha's son for Ravana's destruction, while the Vākātaka queen Prabhavati-gupta (fifth century), the *atyanta-bhagavad-bhaktā* daughter of Chandra-gupta II. was a worshipper of Bhagavat Ramagirisvamin (literally, the lord at Ramagiri, *i e.* modern Ramtek near Nagpur), who seems to be no other than Rāma, son of Dasaratha. The suggestion is supported by the reference in Kālidāsa's *Meghaduta* to the foot-prints of Raghupati (Rāma Dāsarathi) on the Rāmagiri and by the worship of Rama, Lakshmana, and Sita in the temples at Ramtek at the present time.

The worship of the Ikshvāku king is indicated in the sixth century by Varahâmihira who formulated rules for the making of Rāma's image. The south Indian saint Kulasekhara, king of Kerala in the Malabar coast, was a devotee of Rama.

BALARAMA

The worship of the third Rama, *i.e.* Balarama-Sankarshana, is not, however, well attested by epigraphic records of the Gupta age.

The Dwarf incarnation is implied by Vishnu's epithets *Indr-ānuja* (Indra's younger brother) and *Upendra* (the lesser Indra) found in epigraphs like the Bihar pillar inscription of the fifth century, and also by the Junāgarh inscription of Skanda-gupta referring to Vishnu "who, for the sake of the lord of the gods, seized back from Bali the goddess of wealth and splendour."

Krishna's identification with Vishnu is alluded to in the name Vishnugopa, popular in the family of the early Pallavas from the fourth century, and also in the epigraphic passages referring to Vishnu as "the mighty bee on the water-lily which is the face of Jāmbavati" (Tusham inscription) and as "Mādhava whose feet are graced by the attentions of Sri (Lakshmi) and who is born from Vāsudeva" (Aphsad inscription). An image of Krishna was installed in a cave in the Barābar hills by the Maukhari chief Anantavarman in the fifth century.

The Narsimha incarnation is referred to in records like the Alina grant of A.D. 766.

VARAAHA

But the most important *avatāra* whose worship was very popular in different parts of India in the Gupta age seems to have been Varāha or the Boar, whose legend may have been originally associated with that of the Great Deluge referred to in the later Vedic literature. A stone image of Varāha, with an inscription of the time of the Huna king Tormana (c. A.D 500) recording the erection of a stone temple of "Narayana who has the form of a boar," was found at Eran. A Dāmodarpur inscription of the time of Budha-gupta refers to the gods Svetavarāhasvāmin and Kokāmukhasvamin, both representing the Varāha *avatāra*, whose temples stood on the *Himavach-chhikhara* (peak of the Himalayas), apparently at the present Varāhachhatra (Varahākshetra) at the junction of the rivers Kausiki and Koka in Nepal. The popularity of the Boar incarnation in the far south of India is indicated by an early Kadamba record from Tagare belonging to the sixth century. The early Chālukyas had the Boar as their family emblem, said to have been received through the grace of Nārayāna. Most of the records of the Chalukyas and their feudatories begin with an adoration to the Varāha incarnation of Vishnu. ... ...

Extracted from pages 419–423, Chapter on Religion & Philosophy in Vol. III, *The Classical Age – History & Culture of the Indian People – Bhartiya Vidhya Bhawan.* —*Editors*

Scholars of Indian Mythology and ancient texts need to throw more light on this phenomenon. Some other questions which need to be answered are : Why are there Avtaars only of Vishnu ? And why, the first 4-5 forms of the Avtaars, including Nrisingh—are from the strange animal kingdom ? Or, what were the historical complusions or challenges during and after the Gupta Age which prompted the kings or the priests and the people of that period in the heart of India to fall back upon the concept of Avtaars--or Redeemers being born amongt the humans as Reincarnations of Vishnu ? May we leave these questions and many more to the wisdom of our learned readers, especialty the scholars among them!

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Creative Experiences

Malini Chaudhri : ART and LIFE

Writers' Workshop, Calcutta; Rs. 50/- aud Rs. 30/-
(flexi-back)

Review by Shiela Tiwari

An artistically bound book which has something of the "off-the-track tradition of Bengal", really invites one to, at least, turn its pages. It has a mention of the smallest of the associations like that of the book-binder. In spite of this, one should not mistake the Writers' "Workshop" to be some (industrial) workshop. In fact, it is a "small" publication house which claims to run on "No-profit no-loss basis". Believing this, there remains hardly anything to comment on the price.

The author, Malini Chaudhary, has an illustrious academic background. She is presently teaching in China, and does wish to continue her creative writing as a side job. She deserves to be carefully appreciated for her first published attempt. The book dedicated to the author's students in China, is an unusual collection of ten experimental pieces including poems, prose pieces, and film-scripts.

PATH OF LIFE—A ANDVENTURE

Algebrical in design, the poem. 'The Path of Life', impressing to be an impressionist's account in the beginning, is about a large world stretching from the sea below to the sky above. It has a continuity of the thrust and a deep sense of confidence in life.

'An Adventurist's Story' reveals the author's deep faith in herself, who says :

'But I'm not always alone
often, there are pairs of feet
and the path is soft .....can never end.

An experimental piece, "On the Making of a Bourgeo's Home" proves to be a difficult experiment for appreciation by an average person. A Mani Koul -like experiment creator can better decipher this modified creative piece.

EXPOSURE & SEARCH

Whereas "Something about Exposure" has hardly anything to expose of the author's interior feelings, or of what exactly she intends to expose and attack.

'Moghul-or Not ?' has a typical fragrance of the mysterious world. Though Aisha could not be found anywhere, Aisha exists everywhere. She becomes a part of the reader's search. And, at last, when the piece concludes with the suggestion..."It appeared that the agency was run by a woman", one feels— So, she is found at last, there is Aisha.

There are three more poems : "Free Speech is Speechless', "Representing Art', and "A Portrait', Of these, 'A Portrait' is a little longer, and has a woman living and a woman in portrait in the window-frame.

THE THIRD WORLD & HIROSHIMA

'The Third World Goes Abroad', while absorbing, has a reference to the most inhuman chapter in the history of Hiroshima. It is a test of the success of author's ability in transforming a "verbal" creation into a "visual" one effectively. It represents a case of "The inhumanity done to the third world", and the degree of Hiroshima's pain and suffering due to that inhuman act up to the present day.

'Infinite', is a short story, and 'Is Somebody Lying ?" a brainstorm. Nothing is created or preserved and nothing is lost or destroyed. What may be the theme and form of this story, can perhaps be explained by some foreign American system of writing, It indicates the infinite capacity of man, the immensity of human soul, as immense as God Himself.

Two things may be taken into consideration while exercising with this kind of experimental work : (i) It has a wider range as its canvas of communication; and (ii) It has a wider world, similar to the author's world of experience, to be communicated to the reader. So it can best be enjoyed and appreciated by readers who may posses an equally wider range of receptivity.

Prof. Ms. Shiela Tiwari. is with the Department of English, Govt. Girls P. G. College, Bilaspur (M P.)

Books Received

Karan Singh : ESSAYS ON HINDUISM

Pub : Ratna Sagar (P) Ltd. Delhi 110009

V. V. B. Rama Rao : GRAHAM GREENE'S COMIC VISION

Christine Gomez : THE ALIENATED FIGURE IN DRAMA

Pub : Reliance Publishing House, New Delhi 110008

Dr. Christina Gomez : FIRE BLOSSOMS— A Novel on Women

Pub : Better Yourself Books, Bombay, 400050

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The Genius of Ambedkar

(As a Young Scholar and Journalist)

B. H.

[The following tribute to the genius of Dr. Bhimrao R. Ambedkar as a scholar and a journalist in the Centenary Year of his birth is based on summary of principal events and chronolgy of his life compiled and edited by K.N. Kadam in his book—**Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and the Significance of His Movement** (*Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1991*) —*Eds.*]

Young Bhima Rao's formal education began in 1896 in village Dapoli. When the family shifted to Satara, he continued his primary and middle school studies at the local Government Middle School (now renamed Pratapsingh High School). In 1901, the family moved to Bombay, where Bhimarao Ramji Ambedkar (the surname now affixed to his name) first joined the Maratha High School, Parel, and later the Elphinstone High School, passing his miticulation examination in 1907. In January 1908, he joined the Elphintone College, Bombay, and graduated in 1913 (Bachelor of Arts with Politics and Economics).

YOUNG SCHOLAR

The same year he was awarded a scholarship by the Maharaja of Baroda, which took him to the Columbia University, (U. S. A). In June 1915, he passed his Master of Arts examination with a dissertation on "Administration and Finances of the East India Company." He left America in 1916 to join the London School of Economics and Political Science. In 1917, the Columbia University accepted his thesis for the Doctor of Philosophy on *The National Dividend of India ..A Historical Analytical Study.* (Subsequenty published by M/s P. S. King & Son. London, in 1925, under the title....*The Evolutianary Provincial Finance in British India—A Study in the Provincial Decentralisation of Imperial Finance*, with a forword by his teacher, Professor Edwin R. R. Seligman. (The Ph.D. degree was formally conferred on 8th June, 1927)

Meanwhile, Dr. Ambedkar had won more laurels. At the end of his scholarship tenure, he returned to India; and for some time joined the services of the State of Baroda, but not for long. Within a few months, he left for Bombay in protest against some experiences of ill-treatment and untouchability.

THE MOVEMENT

Soon he was in the thick of the new Depressed Classes movement which submitted its demands, including proportional representation to the Secretary of State for India, Montague. For the abolition of untouchability, among other initiatives, the *Asprishyata Nivaran Parishad* had also met at Baroda under the guidance of Maharaja Sayaji Rao Gaikwad of Baroda, when several top-level political and social leaders were present. Drawn into these forums and activities, Dr. Ambedkar was soon to discover his life's mission.

But simultaneously, he did not miss on his academic and scholarly pursuits. He reviewed Bertrand Russell's book, *The Principles of Social Reconstruction* in the *Journal of Indian Economics(Vol. 1, Na. 1, 1918)*. In November 1918, he was appointed Professor of Political Economy in the Sydeanam College of Commerce, Bombay, a post he held until March, 920.

PRESS MEDIUM

During this period, he was gradually but steadily drawn into various programmes of creating awareness among and activating the so-called Depressed Classes, and the Untouchables What better medium could be there for him than the press? Perhaps such thinking led him to start the weekly paper *Mook-Nayak* (Leader or Voice of the Dumb) in January 1920. This was to be the first of a series of journalistic ventures which he was to launch in the course of his public life. As he wrote in the inaugural issue: "It is imperative to suggest ways and means to redress the wrongs done to the Depressed Classes and to discuss measures for their upliftment . . ." However, he severed his links with the *Mook-Nayak* in 1924, which soon stopped publication.

SECOND VISIT ABROAD

In July 1920, however, he left for London to complete his studies in Law and Economics.

Rejoining the London School of Economics and Political Science, and also the Grey's Inn (for Law) he also had the distinction of being invited by Bertrand Russel for a discussion on *The Principles of Social Reconstruction*. He could submit his thesis on *the Problem af the Rupee* to the London University in 1922, (after revising certain anti-imperialist portions, at the suggestion of his teacher Prof. Edwin Cannan, without changing its conclusions) As he wrote in the Preface (of his book), he found himself at variance with the famous Lord John Maynard Keynes (1883-1946) author of *Indion Currency ond Finance*.

". . . Our differences extend to almost every proposition he (Keynes) has advanced in favour of the exchange standard .... nothing will stabilize the rupee unless we stabilize the general purchasing power. That the exchange standard does not do...."

(Overleaf)

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THE GENIUS OF AMBEDKAR

During this visit abroad, he also visited the Bonn University. In 1923, he was called to the Bar, and soon returned to India after re-submitting his thesis, which was also published by P. S. King & Son of London in 1923.

MAN OF MANY PARTS

On return home, he started his legal practice as a Barrister at Bombay. And as time passed, he got more actively involved in the growing movement of the Depressed Classes and the establishment of several institutions and organisations upholding their cause.

His next journalistic venture was through the fortnightly *Bahiskrit Bharat* (Outcast India) in April 1927, soon after the Colaba District Conference of the Bahiskrit Samaj (He had founded the *Bahiskrit Hitkarani Sabha* in 1924 as a movement for social uplift of the Depressed Classes—to "Educate, Agitate, Organise"). These were for him years of restless activity and agitation, conferences and *satyagrahas*.

He was also nominated to the Bombay Legislative Council, where he delivered his maiden speech on February 24, 1927, and spoke on the budget. But outside the Council, he was by then an established leader ! In March 1927, he was to lead the famous Mahad Satyagraha to exercise the rights of the "Untouchables" to draw water from the Chandavar Tank. Other small battles had been fought earlier, at several places. This, however, was the back ground in which the fortnightly *Bahiskrit Bharat* was launched with Ambedkar as its founding editor. His next journal was launched in 1930, the *Janata*, (later renamed *Prabudha Bharat* in 1955) as a fall-out of the invitation received by Dr. Ambedkar to attend the Round Table Conference in London. His voice and stature had matured by then.

✱ *WRITINGS OF Dr. B. R. AMBEDKAR*

[Before closing this note (leaving out the chronology of events in the post-Round Table Conference phase up to his demise) we may, however, taken a note of the important land-marks of Dr. Ambedkar's writings—Ed.]

1. **Administration and Finance of the East India Company (1915)**—Thesis for M.A., Columbia University.
2. **The National Dividend of India : A Historical & Analytical Study (1917)**—Thesis for Ph.D. Columbia, published in 1925 as *Evalution of Public Finance in India* by P.S. King & Son, London.
3. *The Problem of the Rupee*—Thesis for D. Sc. London University, 1923, published by P. S. King & Son, London.

✱ **Important but Miscellaneous Papers or Reviews and Reports during 1916 & 1930 :**

1. **Castes in India : Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development (1916)**—Paper read in Prof. Goldenweiser's Anthropological Seminar (*Indian Antiquary, 1917*)
2. **Review of Bertrand Russel's Principles of Social Reconstructiou (1918)**—published in *Journal of Indian Economic Society* Vol. 1. No. 1, March 1918.
3. **Small Holdings in India : Their Remedies (1918)**—published in the *Journal of India Economic Society Vol. I, II, III.*
4. **Responsibilities of a Responsible Government in India—1923** paper read before the Students' Union.
5. **Evidence before the Hilton Young Commission on Indian Currency (1925).**
6-7. Statements concerning (1) **Education of the Depressed Classes in Bombay Presidency**, and (2) **Safeguards for the Protection of the Interests of the Depressed Classes as a Minority in the Bombay Presidency** etc. etc. submitted to the Simon Commission on behalf of the Bahiskrit Hitkarni Sabha 1928.

✱ 8-9. At the time of the Round Table Conference in London, a Note and a **Scheme on the Political Rights/Safeguards for the Protection of the Depressed Classes** in the Future Constitution of a Self-Governing India were also submitted (1930) [2000 copies of the former note : *Political Rights of the Untouchable* were privately printed in London].

✱ **The next phase of writings by Dr. Ambedkar covers the period 1936—until his death, followed by papers and writings edited and published later. Here is a resume of the same :**

1936 : *Annihilation of Caste* (included in *Writings & Speeches Vol. I)*
1937 : *Mahar Ani Tyanche Vatan* (*Marathi*)
1940 : *Thoughts on Pakistan* (Revised and republished as *Pakistan or the Partition of India in 194*[illegible] (W & S Vol. No. 8)
1943 : *Ranade, Gandhi & Jinnah*
1945 : *What Congress & Gandhi Have Done to the Untouchables*
1945 : *The Communal Deadlock : A Way to Solve It*
1946 : *Who Were the Shudras ?* (W & S Vol. 7)
1946 : *The Cabinet Mission & The Untouchables*
1947 : *Sates and Minorities*
1948 : *The Untouchables* (W & S Vol. 7)
1948 : *Maharashtra as a Linguistic Province* (W & S Vol. [illegible]
1950 : *The Budhha and the Future of His Religion*
1950 : *The Rise & Fall of the Hindu Woman*
1952 : *Budhha Puja-Path* (Marathi) Edited
1956 : *The Budhha & His Dhamma*
1982 : *The Riddle of Rama* (Jalandhar) (W & S Vol. [illegible]

✱ **Note : The Government of Maharashtra has brought out 8 volumes of** *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar : Writings & Speeches (1979-1990).*

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Indian Book Chronicle

Vol. XVI No. 5 MAY 1991

★ ★ ★

A NIGHT OF TRAGEDY (*May 21, 1991*)

It was a night of tragedy, and a sad dawn after the nightmare one could not wish away. Shocked and stunned, one heard the news. None could believe it, not even those who had been loudest in their condemnation and villification of the youngman, fallen victim to a foul act, an evil design. Was he a hero ? A martyr ? A prince charming of the murky, sordid fields of politics ? We can let the future decide that. For the present, the voices of hate and fear, of revenge and rancour were all silent. Subdued and solemn was the grief of friends and foes alike ! In his death, his sacrifice, he had won the hearts of all !

By the early hours of the dawn, when the whispers and sighs of a grief-laden heavy breeze floated across the sub-continent, indeed the world all over, and questions of why and whatever-for hit the shocked minds, in the early wake-ful hours of that fatal day, two lines were revolving in the depths of my mind, until I put them on paper :

"They have murdered Hope !
And killed a Promise !!"

Perhaps I was over-reacting Perhaps I was not right in attributing the promise of a Hope to the fallen youth ! After all, I did not subscribe to his politics, his mixed ideology, his not very forceful rhetoric. But there was no doubt that a Hope and a Promise had died that night

With the passage of slow and fearful hours, more words were added, before and after the brief dirge to Hope. "A Ball of Fire/Explodes ! A Flower/is dead!"

Later, I rephrased and punctuated that expression by adding : "A Ball of Fire/Explodes ! Bouqets and garlands/Lie scattered/Scorched in a Heap ! ! A Red Rose/Among them !"

Much later, more words !

"We live in an Age of Violence !
Of hate born out of Fear !
Vengeance is in their
Scornful Hearts ! !
In this summer of murders,
Violence is their Weapon
Death their message—
Death pouring out/of their blazing guns
And bombs !
Violence is their weapon !
Peace my Defence !
Let there be Peace on Earth !
Let the Sacrifice/Of this human Lamb
Be not in vain !
Forgive them, Father !
For they know not what they do !
Om Shanti ! *Shanti* !! *Shanti* !!!

Later in the day, at a hurriedly called condolence meeting of the Hindostani Manch, I read out some of these lines in their original form and alignment; and we observed the usual silence for the departed, all those whom we have sacrified before the modern 'Durga of Democracy'. And we sent our condolences and sympathies to all the bereaved families over the length and breadth of this vast sprawling land of different cultures and peoples—locked up in their fatal, fateful embrace !

Well, the original two lines and this passage have grown into the moaning of a mournful soul !

Meanwhile, before I could put my pen down, and before the hushed silence after the condolence was broken, we received a composition from a young man who was present on that occasion. He reacted to the lament of Hope murdered and a Promise killed, with some counter questions and a bold affirmation that neither the Hope nor the Promise were dead. Here is the piece by Ravi :

THE GARDEN WILL BLOOM

They despair
For, the image of clay
They worshipped
Lies shattered;
And Hope they bemoan
Has been murdered.

But I see it alive and shining
In the sparkling eyes
Of urchins chattering gaily
On the stone heap by the way-side
Spreading joy !

In the hastening steps
Of the slum-woman
Carrying water for the household
In a pitcher perched on her head—
Excluding love !

In the energetic efforts
Of the labourers
The painters, plumbers, masons,
The grocers and petty vendors
Rendering service to all who need them—
Creating wealth !
The explosion has not killed

(*Continued overleaf*)

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A NIGHT OF TRAGEDY (May 21, 1991)

Their hope
To create and to serve !
To love and to laugh !!

And what if promises, all untrue
Made to deceive and cheat
An entire people
Lull them into false expectations
Dull their senses
Even their dreams
Stand broken—
The fog of falsehood
Stands penetrated !

And now the Nation sees
Itself as it is—
Its true strength, its weaknesses,
And learns to build Itself
Without illusions.

There is hope !/And there is promise !!
Above all – the Garden will bloom
Even if a flower is scorched,
As long as the grass remains green
And the wind blows !!

Ravi, Jaipur

(*May 22, 1991*)

Indeed, the Garden bloom will! That is our hope and endeavour—of our people, young and old, working women and the toiling masses. Meanwhile, the tragedy that has befallen not one family but thousand others, in fact a whole nation, is much too deep and personal to be easily overcome. It has also invoked countless responses of sentiments in poetry and prose, or in silent tributes and vocal memorial services to honour this and several other sacrifices on the alter of Freedom, Democracy and Peace !

Sharing the grief of all those who mourn their dead, we offer a random selection of a few more poetic expressions available with us on this sad theme !

First, we reproduce from the *Letters to the Editor* column of the *Hindustan Times* some lines composed by Dr. L.M. Singhvi, Indian High Commissioner in U. K. :

In Memoriam

Upon soaring expectations on a sunlit summit.
Came searing lava and the earth-quake,
The flower of hope wilted in the ashes
In the season of spring, a void and a Heartache.
Dazed in the maze of public sorrow,
Lost in pensive private grief,
We saw avarice in the eyes of cruel Fate,
In our sylvan home the trespass of the lurking thief.
Planet Earth he loved and was loved in turn,
In the arms of Mother Earth we saw him return,
Smiling visage, his astral body without scar or burn,
His ashes in cosmic communion in the orb and the urn.

L. M. Singhvi
(*High Commissioner of India, London*)

Our friend, Ravi has also sent us another composition of his sensitive reactions to another tragedy a year ago—by coincidence on May, 21, 1990 : –

A SPRING IN KASHMIR

The lovely blue sky
Streaked with clouds
The sun rays shimmering
The sweet scented breeze
Rustling through the trees
The song of birds
Chirping in chorus
The sparkle of poppies
Shining by the wayside
Are all there—

But where is
The barking of dogs
The jingling of cycle-bells
The chatter of women
The kids' playful laughter
And the waddling ducks ??

Instead I see
The jack-booted steel helmeted soldiers
With death spewing guns
... ...
And villagers furitively looking
Out of closed windows

I also see the tension
Heavy as lead
A whisper, a shiver
And beads of sweat
On frightened brows !

For, I am in Kashmir
This spring !
On 21 May, 1990,
A man of religion
Has achieved martyrdom !

May 21, 1990 **Ravi**
(*He is a young bank executive—Eds*)

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Happenings like these—are these natural or inevitable ? Are the gods that be, out to punish the human mortals for some human lapses ? Who can say ? Meanwhile, we continue to lament in the words of a poet from Bihar Sharif – Naushad A. Khan :

THE LAMENT

The untraceable clouds,
The multicoloured flowers,
The cascading waterfall,
The shimmering stars,
Depict an unearthly beauty,
Tinged with the charm of supernatural.
But when I look closely,
All this appears very gloomy,
Which has borne the testimony,
To the senseless killings,
And untold suffering through ages;
I would give half my life to,
One who could make a weeping child smile.
And would give the other half to protect
A fresh flower from destruction.
I would walk for a thousand years
For a song,
And ride all the stormy seas
Together the fragrance of the Lilac,
I am human, with all the cares of humanity
Can I have peace while blood is being shed ?

Naushad A. Khan, Dept. of English, Soghta College, Bihar Sharif (Nalanda).

The voice from the Punjab is no less anguished and full of pain. It is the cry of a deeply wounded and lacerated soul.

Two POEMS by **Kulwant Singh Gill**

HOME-COMING

As the home-sick sun
Sinks into his mother's lap
And the wintry darkness
Descends on field and farm
Birds, beasts and humans
Rush homewards to shelters warm.

On the partiarchal peepul tree
Venerated by the village
As its presiding deity,
A lone, nestless rook
Gives a raucous plaint
As the hesitant, harried, homeless youth
Turns his laden feet
With hopes
Forlorn and faint,
Filled with intense desire
To see his ailing mother
And disconsolate sire,
Always hiding, always on the run,
His heart
A wintry waste land
Pining for the sun.

Thud, thud of iron-heeled boots
Flash lights, whistles, explosions
Whine of cowering curs
The shrill cry of pertified peacocks
And then
Death—like silence in deserted lanes.

The sun returns to rouse
The fightened folk to see
Scattered under the hoary tree
Shells of a carbine
Leaves of a prayer book
Shreds of staring flesh.

Butchered innocence, demanding reproof
When the stunned mother
Fails to recognise
The mangled youth.

PUNJAB MATA

Mournful mother—
For whom
You beat the breast blue
For whom
Your rend the sky with wails ?

What ill wind has blown
Over your laughing fields
What blight has cursed
Your song and smile ?

Who has sown
The seeds of cancerous hate
Born of vicious aims
And shameless guile ?

Your sons—
The hunter and the hunted
Lie mangled in gory dust
For they heeded not your silvery hair
Held not each other in trust.

Who will restore your blithe spirit
Who will take you in filial embrace
Who will wipe your tears dry
Who will see the smile on your face ?

(Dr. Kulwant Singh Gill, is Assoc. Prof. of English, Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana.)

(Continued on Page 6)

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SAHITYA AKADEMI

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Festival of Letters 1991

A Report by M. Prabha

Where does Indian literature stand after a century of creative outpourings by poets, dramatists, fiction writers and essayists ?

Litterateurs from all over the country assembled at the Rabindra Bhavan and the India International Centre, New Delhi, and for a whole week in February strove to arrive at some consensus on an End-of-the Century assessment of Indian literature.

THE LONGEST CENTURY

"The 20th century has been one of the longest centuries in human history; its impact on all aspects of culture has been out of all proportions to the one hundred years covered by it", felt K. Ayyappa Paniker.

"Why do we forget that this is a century which has witnessed two world wars and a near third one recently, before our eyes ? Utterly unexpected and a reminder to us that we haven't yet seen the end of imperialism. What has ended is socialism The question remains : How should we oppose the new onslaught of colonisation ?" queried Prof. Namvar Singh.

"Indian literature at the end of 20th century will have to be declared to be in grave peril. If some poor backward countries in Latin America can throw up brilliantly original and innovative writers, there is no reason why this vast subcontinent cannot produce writers who will advance towards new territories ?" wondered Prof Vilas Sarang

A SENSE OF ACHIEVEMENT & HOPE

But, not all the literati participating in the Seminar seemed bereft of a sense of achievement. Some were full of hope for a creative future.

For Dr Nagendra, this has been a great century which compared with the golden age of devotional poetry—the age of Kabir, Kamban, Kritibas, Tulsi and Jnaneshwar. An age when Rabindranath, Iqbal, Shankara Kurup produced their masterpieces and Jai Shankar Prasad wrote *Kamayani.* In fact, he felt, the developments in all the three fields—poetry, fiction and drama—were unprecedented in this century. Describing it as a fertile period in the history of modern poetry, he listed Bhai Veer Singh, Nirala, Pant, Mahadevi Verma, Kusumagraj as some of the 'luminous stars' in the firmament. Poets like Vishnu De, Faiz, Muktibodh and Agyeya gave an artistic expression to the complexities of contemporary life in the true sense, according to him.

A NEW GENRE — THIRD WORLD LITERATURE & PSEUDO-INDIANNESS

With landmarks like Rabindranath's *Gora* and Premchand's *Godan*. Indian fiction too could be heralded as a creation of the present century. This century also saw the formulation of a new genre, the 'Third World literature'. It its initial stages, it was characterised by 'militant decolonisation' (Premchand, Krishan Chander, Raja Rao, Mulk Raj Anand) in our context. Such a sensibility, of late, has become feeble and slack: (Nirmal Verma, Harivanshrai Bacchan, Anita Desai, Nayantara Sehgal).

"Why do we not have among us," moaned a speaker, "a Gabriel Garcia Marquez, a Chinua Achbe or Ngugi Wa Thiongo ?" Such a situation, according to him, has arisen out of an evaporation of the national sentiment. It is the current belief that Indians can only know themselves by going through a journey of Europe and America. This has given rise to literary works full of 'pseudo-Indianness.'

The writings of such foreign-returned and remarkably clever writers contain all those tricks and ingredients suggesting 'Indianness' which is fonnd in the Bombay '*masala*' films depicting the life of tribals, says Namvar Singh. And the West, complacent in its own 'modernity', he continues, almost inevitably applauds such 'authentic' works of Third World literature. Deriding the works of such writers as the 'ooze of affluence', he cites the examples of Amitav Ghosh, Vikram Seth and Shrikant Verma. Paradoxically, all three are winners of Sahitya Akademi awards. "For, before their ultra-Indianness, not only Phanishwarnath Renu, Gopinath Mohanty, Takazhi Pillai, Shivarama Karanth seem rather less Indian, but also Premchand and Saratchandra."

Further discomfiting is the fact that even the 'Dalit literature' which has escaped this neocolonist ideology, in Namvar Singh's view, is being appropriated by hegemonic forces in the country. So that this patch of land too has been infiltrated by the 'unauthentic'.

REGIONAL LITERATURE : A LITTLE POND CROWDED WITH FROGS

Voicing similar concern was Dr Vilas Sarang, who traced the declining standard of Marathi literature, and compared the Marathi literary world to a little pond crowded with frogs croaking at each other in self-satisfaction. He lamented at the loss of cross-pollination, whereby Marathi writers were actively absorbing influences from classical Greek, Chinese, contemporary French, German, Spanish, Russian and Italian. He pointed out that the vibrancy of the early

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60's has been abandoned for a style of writing that revels drab, mulish realism devoid of any imaginary spark. The entire Marathi literary world, he added, has become insufferably insular today with no trace of any desire for experimentation or innovation.

For Ayyappa Paniker, conflict was the key word today—conflict between groups and classes, between ideologies, between generations, genders, socio-economic systems and between theories of art. Nonconformism, dissent and revolt has become the order of the day. Yet this conflict in no way has fertilised tradition. On the other hand, it has unconsciously propelled tradition as an obscurantist and unquestionable doctrine. The toadstool of 'fundamentalism' has sprouted out of the dungheap of such literary tradition.

INDIAN IDENTITY & PLURALITY OF CULTURE

Prof. Gangadhar Gadgil emphasised the plurality of Indian culture and decried the grand assertion of Indian literature as 'one' being written in several languages. According to him, each regional literature was a separate entity, and the Sahitya Akademi was artificially trying to weld these different entities into one. Whet does a Maharashtrian writer have in common with a Punjabi writer? And what does a Tamil writer have in common with a Bengali writer? It was a painful soul-searching question that was posed to the audience. Not one including the officials of the Sahitya Akademi came up with any befitting reply.

ROLE OF SAHITYA AKADEMI

In fact, a member of the audience stood up and observed that the Sahitya Akademi had vested interests in keeping the concern going as it provides prestigious posts and perks for academics and bureaucrats based in the capital. He pointed in anguish at the vast amount of funds being expended for arranging the Festival, the estimate for which ran to Rs.95 lakhs. The issue, he said, for a backward nation like ours was not the promotion of literature, but the promotion of literacy; not the promotion of higher education but the promotion of primary education. As expected, there were vehement protests from some members, but also shamefaced blushes from some others.

A SILENCE THAT SPOKE VOLUMES

Continuing the strain of national consciousness, it was stressed that the identity of Indian literatures had no similarity to the unity of works such as *Canterbury Tales*, *Macbeth* or *Paradise Lost*. We only have the examples of our epics such as the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* as unifying forces. Some minority groups at once stood up and objected to this kind of *Hindutva* concept of commonality. This included the Sikh writers, the Syrian Christians and the Muslims. There was a prolonged silence in the hall, again re-emphasising not our unity but our ruptures.

READERSHIP CRISIS : WHO READS BOOKS TODAY ?

Presiding over the Sahitya Akademi Awards function, Bhisham Sahni quizzed, "Who reads books today ?" And he added :

"Wander through the whole of Delhi ; cross a million '*bastis*' and look for a single shop. You won't find any. Even if you do, it will be stocked only with books in English. Today, it is only writers who read each other's books, or per chance, a bored housewife who tries to while away her sleepy afternoons. Yes, may be a student who has to study for his exams. For the rest, the general mainstream, the writer is still on the threshold of society."

To this there was an amusing remark which floated in the hall. "The writer is not on the threshold of society. He is the pariah of the society – the unrecognised scheduled caste." The voice was that of an embittered writer.

Despite the fact that literature embodies the highest human values and stands for social equality, secularism and national integrity, a writer's contribution to society has been scarcely recognised. According to Sahni, culpability lay not with the writers, but with a social set-up that provided a fillip to entertainment-oriented literature.

He moaned that, in our country, where the bureaucracy holds an upper hand, it was customary for the state to 'adopt' any writer who tried to express ire, give him an award, make him a member of some society and then silence him. "Yes, we are given awards but everything stops after that. We want our books to reach our readers. We want children to learn from our literature. We want to play our rightful role in shaping the consciousness of our society torn by a million tensions".

From the western society, the example of a rebel comes to mind—that of Jean Paul Sartre who refused the Nobel prize precisely because he did not want his speech to be bartered for a Laureate's silence.

AWARD WINNERS, SEMINAR SPEAKERS & ALL

And then came the awards with 22 award winners–10 poets, 8 novelists, 3 short-story writers and one essayist. One in his 30s, six in their 40s, eight in their 50s, six in their 60s and one in his 70s. Statistics duly pointed out by Prof. Indra Nath Choudhury, the competent secretary of the Akademi and a bureaucrat in his own right. To aid him was a woman deputy secretary. The lady made more than one faux pas, while introducing authors to the audience, often mixing up their names, the languages they wrote in, the titles and the chronology of their works. The bureaucracy was out to establish its hegemony over the wretched flock of writers and left no stone unturned to demonstrate it.

(*Continued overleaf*)

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FESTIVAL OF LETTERS 1991

However, one category of speakers stood out and this belonged to a galaxy of bureaucrats and establishment-propped authors—Sitakant Mahapatra, Namvar Singh, Kedar Nath Singh, Nirmal Verma, Jayanta Mahapatra, Dilip Chitre and Randhir Khare.

Other speakers who impressed the audience by their erudition, humility and dedication to their discipline were U.R. Anantha Murthy, S.L. Bhyrappa and Manohar Rai SarDessai. They spoke about socio-political roots in Indian Fiction and Regional Identity.

LANGUAGE AS A TOOL

Of the three women awardees, Shashi Deshpande seemed to be militating against a dual problem. "It is difficult for a woman to be taken seriously as a writer", she said, "more so, if she is writing in English. I have a feeling of being put on a dock. I've been writing now for years, but the academics in the Campuses take note of only the Oxbridge-type, whether their works are relevant or not in our context."

At this juncture, Prof. Das came to her rescue by naming Vikram Seth's *Golden Gate* as a glaring example of our misplaced response. Another member lambasted the enthusiasm shown for Amitav Ghosh's *Shadow Lines*, which he categorised as a marginalised experience peculiar to an elitist writer.

Shashi Deshpande defended herself saying, "Yes, writing in English is considered elitist in this country. But language is only a tool to convey what the writer wants to say. By itself, it cannot make an elitist or alien literature."

A member promptly rebutted her argument saying that there was no dearth of the alienated, jet-set Indian writers in English who have shed their brown origins as a snake sloughs away its skin, dropping a string of names—Bharati Mukherjee, Shashi Tharoor, Farrukh Dhondy, Profulla Mohanty, R. Parthasarathy, and A. K. Ramanujan. This drew loud guffaws from the listeners.. !

Mrs. M. Prabha is a Research Scholar at the Centre of Linguistics & English, School of Languages, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

(*Continued from Page 3*)

A NIGHT OF TRAGEDY

Poet Moin Qazi from Nagpur, however, raises some valid questions about the destiny of Man and the present crisis in our civilisation :

A POET ASKS

MAN

In this the face of man
or is he the missing link
between animal and man ?
Innocent children, chaste wives
being ravaged and reviled.
Breathing lives being suuffed
and baked like festival goats.
Why did we produce so many
civilisations, so many cultures,
so many books, so many inventions.
When we knew we had
to go back to the animal age?

Stone age was certainly better
At least the weapons of death
weren't so cruel and harsh
And now, when we have
the efflorescence of science
death need not be peaceful.
Hiroshima, Chernobyl, Bhopal
and the toxic chemicals
that gush with the breath
make us wish for the age
when Man was Man.

CIVILISATION

What has become to we humans today ?
We lay claim to a great spiritual heritage
and proclaim the lofty values of forefathers.

Civilisation has washed the heritage away
as we yearn to see even a glimmer of it

Loot, murder, molestation, cheating,
are the new symbols of a new society
as we shudder to think of any new outrage.

The morning newspaper is a gloomy experience.
It doesn't bring a new dawn of freshness
It only shows the fast approaching darkness.
Dubious politicians and greedy officials
spew the page with dirt, venom and hatred.

The saints are not dead, nor even chained.
They have retired to mountains and forests
afraid of the horror that stalks the earth.

They are busy counting beads, chanting hymns
while innocent men live defenceless, helpless
running from one widlerness to another,
crying, wailing, shrieking in the void.

The only saints who have remained with us are:
the kind nurse amidst oozing sores of lepers,
the merciful judge amidst a crowd of tyrants,
the honest official amidst heaps of wealth.

—**Moin Qazi**
[*A Nagpur-based bank executive*]

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THE CHANGING FACE OF POLICE AMINISTRATION

S K. Ghosh (Editor)

POLICE ADMINISTRATORS : REMINISCENCES

Ashish Publishing House, New Delhi, Rs. 150/-

Reviewed by Bhawani Mal

Responding to a request from S K Ghosh, former Inspector General of Police, Orissa, eighteen retired I.P S. officers have recalled their years in service; and their reminiscences have been brought out in the book under review. They virtually represent a generation of policemen — M. K. Sinha, the oldest of them, was appointed to the erstwhile Indian Police (I.P.) in 1928, the year in which B K Panigrahi, the youngest contributor, was born. Leaders of service in their own day, they had made it to the top either as police chiefs in various States or as heads of central police organisations, the only exception being R. Deb who held charge of the Department of Law, National Police Academy for two decades Eleven of them had seen service both before and after independence.

RING-SIDE VIEWS OF DECLINE & UNHAPPY EXPERIENCES

Having occupied ring-side positions, contributors to this book had witnessed kaleidoscopic changes at the national and state levels. Recollecting these, they have mentioned some highlights of their careers and expressed their views on various aspects of policing.

POLITICAL INTERFERENCE

M. K. Sinha, one of the oldest and most highly respected policemen of the country, who continues to evince a keen interest in police administration, bemoans the decline in efficiency and effectiveness of the force. Among other things, he attributes this to interference by some of the politicians exercising extra-constitutional authority. Dealing with "The Policeman and The Politician", A. K. Ghosh also blames the latter's incursion in the executive field for indiscipline and politicisation of officials. Writing in a similar strain, V.G. Kanetkar maintains that anybody showing too much of independence and failing to fall in line with the ministers, even if they are incorrect or unfair or unjust, runs the risk of being considered *persona non-grata*. Confirming this from personal experience. Ranjit Gupta recalls that he was 'sent on exile', because the drive launched by him as Commissioner of Police. Calcutta, against Naxalites happened to hurt some of the Congress and anti-social allies of the government then in power. V.N. Rajan suffered a similar fate in Kerala, where he was transferred fourteen times in as many years.

THEIR OWN FAULT TOO

Police officers themselves also come in for a lot of criticism for the sorry state of affairs. Kanetkar deplores the weakeing of their moral fibre, and regrets that senior officers have not uniformly attempted to rid the force of evils such as the use of third degree methods, recording of false evidence, collusion with criminals, corruption, rudeness in dealing with public, shielding guilty subordinates, misuse of powers etc.

G.C. Dutt is even more forthright when he comments on the docile manner in which the police officers concerned with VIP security acted when somebody from PM's offlce thundered at them in the name of the Prime Minister for reporting against Beant Singh. In his view, these officers did not act creditably by taking the rebuke of the PM's office and refraining from taking further action for replacing Beant Singh, who eventually succeeded in killing Mrs. Gandhi in a cruel shoot-out at her own residence. Dutt ruefully observes that these are the problems which are caused by "sub-standard and not really dedicated officials."

S. C Chaudhuri even goes to the extent of remarking that the creation of the Indian Police Service has not served the purpose it was meant for, since the officers could achieve nothing on the national or state basis to stem the rot except making individual efforts to keep the evil forces at bay. This is certainly an uncharitable assessment with which not many would agree. For all their flaws and drawbacks, to which attention has been pointedly drawn in various articles, the police—and the I.P.S. as such—have done a lot to safeguard national interests and kept, to quote Rustamji, "the ship of state on an even keel".

S. P. *VS.* D. M.

Several contributors have thrown interesting light on police working from another angle. M.K. Sinha deplores the dilution of authority of the District Superintendent of Police (S.P.), the king-pin of police administration.

Kanetkar discusses the role of S.P, *vis-a-vis* D M , and observes that the now distance between the two functionaries is much wider than it was during the British days, and this affects police administration to a certain degree. Testifying to the superlative work done by the police whether in liquidating dacoits, curbing communal riots, frenzied demonstrations etc , he regrets that no attempt has been made at a fair evaluation of their performance, and this he attributes to the fact that they have always been dominated by another service like the old I.C S. and now the I.A S.

Echoing this view, S. K. Ghosh recalls that during his district days, D. M. and S P. used to function as a 'two-headed single-minded' team He laments that the position is not so happy now, and this has ruined administration at the district level Later day officers have also given vent to their feelings on the subject. While Rajan refers to the steady

(Continued)

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accretion of responsibility and a corresponding erosion of administrative power as far as the higher echelons of service are concerned. Panigrahi views it rather philosophically. According to him, "it has been the fortunate lot of policeman in the post-independence days that he has many masters and law is only of them, and that being legal and rule-wise always does not pay."

SOME REMEDIES

Several suggestions have been given for tackling the problems faced by the police. True to his type, Deb, the legal luminary, observes unequivocally that since a policeman derives his authority from the law, he must live scrupulously by law.

Dutt is for "mending your own house first and always", and for that, dealing effectively with errant policemen for their acts of omission and commission.

Rustamji believes that the traditions of impartial and lawful action against all those who pose a threat to the integrity of the nation must be maintained, if we are to progress in a democratic way.

Kanetkar agrees that the police must improve their performance. He, however, feels that this can be done by treating them as an independent agency, *i.e.* free from the control of a sister service, and entrusting them with full responsibility insofar as their work is concerned

On the relationship with the 'sister service', S.K. Ghosh commends the example of officers (of I.A.S. and I P.S) who are "good friends, their wives attend social functions and visit cinemas together". Though socializing thus is desirable, it is too much to expect that this would solve the basic problem.

DOWN MEMORY LANE FOR PROFESSIONAL SATISFACTION

Travelling down memory lane, the contributors have narrated events that had given them professional satisfaction. Arul recalls his successful handling of the anti-Hindi agitation in Tamilnadu, and especially singles out the instance of a solitary constable holding at bay a violent mob of 2000 who wanted to burn the Kodambakkam railway station.

Lobo cites the Commander Nanavati case which had generated unusual excitement because of the personalities involved.

P.K. Basu records with gratification how the citizens of West Bengal had come forward spontaneously to help the police meet the Naxalite challenge; and notes that in a democratic society, order can be maintained only with the active and willing cooperation of the people with the police.

PUBLIC-POLICE RELATIONS : THE HUMAN TOUCH

On public-police relations, N. Swain narrates his experiences in inducting the police in what he appropriately calls "the service of the damned and the destitutes." '*Karunya*' (mercy) camps were organised by the Orissa police in different parts of the State to provide relief to people affected by natural calamities and also to protect the 'Juangs', a vanishing tribe. He feels that such a humanitarian role would inculcate in the police a sense of human values and lend to its ever unfriendly image a spirit of service and sacrifice. Surely, no amount of gimmickry or artful window dressing can match this positive and constructive approach to bring the police closer to people and to serve them better.

SERVICE TRADITIONS & PRESENT CHALLENGES

Reading between the lines, we get glimpses of a policeman's life over the years. It was comparatively easy and more relaxed in the past. Thus, we have Ranjit Gupta referring to the service traditions that required one to shoot snipe and go for a tiger if one got a chance. Pant also remembers the West Khandesh district which gave him plenty of chances for big game hunting. All this sounds like a tale of bygone age. Arul puts it pithily when he observes that in today's situation of rising mass lawlessness and terrorism, the Indian policeman carries a far greater burden than his counter-part in any other part of the world. Yet, in spite of being exhausting and often exasperating, his lot is not altogether without a humourous side, especially for those inclined to be impetuous and iconoclastic, as revealed by Venugopal Rao in his hilarious and high sounding piece on 'Nehru And I".

INTROSPECTION & CANDID EXPOSURE

The merit of musings by police brasshats who had seen it all and are now in a position to describe it without mincing words, lies in their being an exercise in self-analysis They have turned the torch inward and been quite candid in exposing inadequacies of the system, pinpointing professional hazards, laying blame where it belongs for failure of leadership and giving a grim warning that it would be perilous to ignore writings on the wall.

Recently, memoris of some Indian Police officers (1915-48) were brought out in an extremely readable book under the caption "*On Honourable Terms*" by Martin Wynne. Though writing does not come that easily to their successors in service, perhaps because of their relentless pre-occupation with crime and criminals, some of the articles in the book under review are remarkable for the quality of content as well as excellence of expression. Literature on the subject is scanty and S.K. Ghosh has really done a commendable job by editing this book of reminiscences. It will be found interesting and useful by policemen as well as all those who have anything to do with police administration.

Mr. Bhawanimal is a former I.G. Police, Delhi. He was recently Member of Rajasthan Public Service Commission, Ajmer.

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REFLECTIONS ON MARXISM IN INDIA

P. C. Joshi

MARXISM AND SOCIAL REVOLUTION IN INDIA AND OTHER ESSAYS

Patriot Publishers, New Delhi, 1986. pp. 227.

Comments by G Krishnan Kutty

This is a collection of some thought-provoking and critical essays by Professor P.C. Joshi, one of the well-known economists of India. In explaining the objectives of the essays included in this book, he says "In the author's view, a transition from the era of missed opportunities to that of creative social praxis today requires both ideological and organisational bridge-building between the nationalist and the social -ist forces. Such bridge-building cannot be accomplished without overcoming the prejudices and dogmas inherited from the past, without arousing a sense of challenge and urgency for the pursuit of common aims and goals. and without effecting a breakthrough in the realm of ideas and concepts." (*p. xi*) P.C. Joshi succeeds, to a large extent, in fulfilling his goal.

MARXISM AMIDST FATALISM OF MASSES & AFFLUENCE OF THE FEW

The critical views of the old-fashioned ways of thinking prevalent in India as a result of some wrong interpetations of Hindu classics and religious ways of living have forced people to live in the belief that life is not worth living, and that fatalism is a way of life for the poor and the miserable. At the same time, the consumer habits of the few at the top are shamefully snobbish and staggering. The two extreme types of life exist in modern India, recently emerged out of colonialism.

In his reflections on Marxism, with referece to India, Joshi rightly points out : "Even today, the full potentialities of a resurgence of Marxism as an intell-ectual force are not fully appreciated and grasped by the Marxist establishment." *(p 2)* This paper which was published in 1974, was criticised by Marxsits, and he replies as follows : "In my view, the comments by E.M S and Ajit Roy do not give any indication of their awareness of the complexity of the challenge facing Indian Marxists at the intellectual level for coping with challenges at the political level." Again, Joshi adds as follows : "In many advanced countries, Marxism emerged and grew stronger first as an intellectual force, before it spread and gathered strength as a political force. In ex-colonial and semi-feudal countries like India, on the other hand, its emergence as a political force preceded its emergence as an intellectual force." *(p. 3)* Again, he rightly stressess : "The critical, activist and creative tendencies in Marxism have often been overwhelmed in India by conformist, fatalist and mechanistic revision of Marxism itself. The Marxist became hostile to questioning and independent thinking so necessary for construction of a Marxist perspective on Indian problems." *(p. 5)*.

EMPOWERMENT & ENLIGHTENMENT OF MASSES

P.C. Joshi rightly stressed in his interpretation of the Indian situation the exaggerated importance given to the existence of the supernatural force directing the operation of nature and society. He argues that the masses in India were kept away from property and power; they were also kept away from the means of enlightenment. Again, as the author puts forth well, a cultural revolution, either within religion or outside religion, was thwarted and also delayed because of the ramifications of direct colonialism.

In the second essay on the roots of the politico-economic problem in India, Joshi examines these issues with greater thoroughness. In agrarian societies like India, still suffering from socio-econmic ravages of colonial rule, the weaker sections like peasants and labourers are not a minority, but indeed they constitute the whole society. The absence of a creative approach from outside is well indicated by the author. Joshi also pleads for the need for an interaction between academic scholars and political leaders. He states that in making agrarian studies, the task outlined by Marc Bloch for French scholars has great relevance for Indian scholars today. *(p. 85)*.

POVERTY & LAND REFORMS

In his study of the national integration and development processes, Joshi takes into consideration the views of some eminent economists of India. The essay on perspectives on social change is well written one. The author has made strong crittical remarks on the ways in which poverty eradication is dealt with in India. There is a good essay on crossing the barrier of poverty. Land reforms constitute the key to this, according to Joshi.

On the whole, P.C Joshi has presented for the benefit of scholars, activists and the lay readers an extremely profitable collection of essays on the current socio-economic issues with special reference to India. His interpretations and indications can be profitably utilised by research scholars working on these problems.

Dr G. Krishnan Kutty was a Research Fellow at the Indian Institute of Advanced Studies, Shimla, when he sent us this short comment last October.

BOOK RECIEVED

REFECTIONS ON WOMEN—Selections *from Nehru's Writings & Speeches—Edited* by Pratibha Jain

Sponsored by *Rajasthan Adult Education Association*, Jaipur

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AN INNOVATION OR A COSMETIC CHANGE ?

M Kistaiah (Ed.) : ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS IN A DEVELOPING SOCIETY

Sterling Publishers New Delhi, (1990) Pp. 118, Rs 110/-

Reviewed by Ram K Vepa

The book, according to its editor, "attempts to present a panoramic view of the developments in the State Administration of Andhra Pradesh, specially after '83, when a number of changes were introduced at several levels". Actually, it focusses only on three aspects of it, *viz.* Revenue Administration, Panchayati Raj Institutions and Credit Cooperatives. Even in these subjects, the book is merely an edited compilation of papers presented at a seminar held in 1988, under the joint auspices of the IIPA (Indian Institute of Public Administration) and the Department of Political Science and Public Administration (presumably of the Kakatiya University at Warangal).

CHANGES AT THE VILLAGE, TALUKA & ZILLA LEVELS

Since Andhra Pradesh is one of the states which have attempted to innovate administrative practices, the papers are of interest. Andhra Pradesh was formed in 1956, with the merger of areas from undivided Madras and a part of the Nizam's dominions, and inherited a pattern of revenue administration from both the regions In 1983, with the assumption of office by a regional party (Telugu Desam—TDP) this was sought to be replaced by a new system, in which the hereditary Village Officers (the *Karnam* or *Patwari* and the *Munsiff* or *Police Patel*) were abolished, and in turn, a full paid government functionary, known as the Village Assistant, was appointed. Along with it, the traditional *Taluka* (with a population of 1 to 2 lakhs) was replaced by a smaller division to be known as the *Mandal* with a population of 35 to 50,000 Apart from vague, unproven statements like "the Taluka system was viewed by people as authoritarian", the book gives no information on how far these changes really helped the people, and at what price.

FOUR TIERS OF PRI'S

The same can be said of the changes introduced in the Panchayati Raj (PR) system. Andhra Pradesh was the second state in the country to have adopted the three-tier structure in 1959—the Panchayat at the Village level, the Samiti at the Block level and the Zilla Parishad at the district level. This was replaced in 1987, by a four-tier pattern—the *Gram Panchayat* at the Village, the *Mandal Praja Parishad* (at the Mandal level), a *Zilla Praja Parishad* (at the district level) and a *Zilla Pranalika Abhivruddhi Mandal* (ZPAM—Planning and Development Board) which is presided over by a Minister (designated for the district) and with the Collector as its Secretary.

WHY STATE INTERVENTION ?

It is not clear why, in a supposedly decentralised pattern, it was felt necessary to provide for State Government intervention at the district level. Perhaps, this was done because most of the ZPs were earlier dominated by the Congress Party, and there was apprehension that they might continue to do so, although the ruling TDP controlled 19 out of the 22 Parishads in the new dispensation. It certainly seems that the new system was much more centralised than the previous one, which with all its faults, did provide opportunities for local initiative.

ROLE OF DISTRICT COLLECTOR

The position of the District Collector has been considerably whittled down in the revised system, he being made the Secretary of the ZPAM. Formerly, as the Chairman of all the Standing Committees of the ZP, the District Collector was in a position to influence the decisions of that body. It also gave him a clout (as I can well testify from my personal experience in the early sixties) to ensure the active cooperation of the District officials with the PR bodies. This is no longer the case. It is, therefore, difficult to reconcile with the statement made in the book that 'the 'Collector is accorded a position of pre-eminince in the revised PR system'.

SINGLE WINDOW FOR COOPERATIVE CREDIT

The third aspect dealt with in the book is that of tne Credit Cooperatives, and the attempt to set up a 'Single Window Cooperative Credit Delivery System' by merging the institutions responsible for the sanction and disbursement of the Short-Term and Long-Term. Loans as well as Marketing. The new system which was not fully operational (at the time of the Seminar) could not be discussed fully, though it was felt that, in the absence of any modification of the existing procedures, there is unlikely to be any major change in the tedious business of grant of these loans.

LACKING IN ANALYSIS

While the papers included in the book give a good factual picture of the changes made, they are short on analysis or review (except perhaps in one case). Perhaps it was too early to do so. Even so, one would have expected some assessment of the costs involved in providing personnel and infrastructure for the larger number of Revenue Mandals, on the plea of bringing administration closer to the people. Has this really happened ? Was it really beneficial without being vitiated by local feuds and prejudices ?

It would have been of interest if the so-called 'reforms' had been analysed more rigorously, since the impression one gets in reading the book is that the whole exercise was merely cosmetic and was dictated by political expediency rather than a genuine

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"BOONS" OF AN "INFORMAL" ECONOMY

A CASE STUDY OF PERU

Hernando De Soto : THE OTHER PATH : The Invisible Revolution in the Third World

Harper & Row Publishers, New York (1989) pp 271, $ 22 95

Review Article by Harsh Sethi

To be told that all that we read or thought about and tried to put into practice was completely misplaced is, at the best of times, an unsettling experience. And today, when confirmed socialists turn back to Hayek and sing the virtues of capitalism and the free market, when the call of the day seems to be a 'retreat from socialism' and the need to liberalize — then the time seems to be apt for each one of us to look back and re-assess the 'wisdom' that we had been espousing.

THE PANACEA OF STATE

For decades now, the panacea for under developed Third World states seemed to lie in a 'state'-sponsored and directed 'social policy and engineering' mix. In the absence of much needed socio-cultural and political institutions, skills and technologies, the vision of transformation revolved around the instrumentality of the 'state.' Everything — development, welfare, equality, even empowering the poor — was the historical burden of a self-selected class or strata which, over the last four to five decades, attempted to create the wherewithal — the rules and regulations, the laws and procedures, the instrumentalities -- to totally transform their societies The paradox is that the glo -rious efforts at doing such good, more often than not, ended up essentially in entrenching a bureaucratic and parasitic strata whose net impact upon society was the counter-opposite of the stated goals. Thus, each of our societies has witnessed a growth not in what we had hoped and planned for — but in violence, misery, oppression, poverty and social anomic The counter conventional wisdom, that of a violent revolution, too seems to have suffered a similar fate, if what we are currently witnessing in post-revolutionary regimes is anything to go by.

A SILENT MIRACLE OF INFORMAL ECONOMY

One answer to where we went wrong is available in De Soto's *'The Other Path'* which, in a concrete analysis of Peru, graphically presents not what has gone wrong and why (though this too can be had in plenty), but that our essential fallacy has been in looking where we have been looking. For, while we, with our 'troubled conscience', have been busy lamenting the horrors of the present, the proverbial ordinary citizen has been getting on with his/her work– in the process, constructing a silent miracle in what are seen as ossified and stullified economies.

'The Other Path' is the story of the 'informal sector' in Lima. De Soto argues that the 'informal economy' is usually thought of as a problem : clandestine, unregistered, illegal companies and industries that pay no taxes, compete unfairly with companies and industries that obey the law and pay taxes promptly. This kind of thinking which looks upon black marketeers and brigands who deprive the 'state' of funds it might use to remedy social problems and strengthen society, is totally erroneous. The problem 'is not the black market bur the state itself.' The informal economy is 'the people's spontaneous and creative response to the state's incapacity to satisfy the basic needs of the impoverished masses.' When legality is a privilege available only to those with political and economic power, those excluded—the poor—have no alternative but illegality. That is why the informal economy comes into being.

To take just one example cited in the book, the 'cost of legality' is enormous. To register a small cloth factory in Peru takes a group of four 289 days as well as $ 1231 (including expenses and lost wages). This, in summer of 1983, when the exercise was carried out, was the equivalent of 32 minimum monthly wages. The cost for a group of low income families to get the state to cede them a vacant lot on which to build their homes was computed as six years and eleven months and $ 2156 (56 times the minimum monthly wage *per* person). Even to get a license to open a kiosk or sell from a puschart involved forty-three days of shuttling between bureaucrats and $ 590.95 (15 times the minimum monthly wage). Is it surprising that survival can be ensured only through informality and illegality ?

'BLACK MARKET' & EXTRA-LEGAL WAYS

But this story, tragic and Kafkaesque as it might seem, is essentially one of courage and success, of will, imagination and a desire to work. In Lima alone, the local black market (excluding manufacture) employs 4,39,000 people. Of the 331 markets in the city, 274 (83 per cent) have been built by black marketeers. About 95 per cent of the public transport, representing an investment of over a billion dollars in vehicles and

(*Continued overleaf*)

(Contd) **Administrative Reforms . . .**

desire to reform the administration. It seems a pity that such political opportunism is given some respectability by academics debating over their 'rationale', where none seems to exist; but this is typical of the new intellectuals that seem to be everywhere.

The price of the book (at one rupee a page) seems absurdly high. Surely, there has to be some norm in such matters. Or are such books meant only for esoteric college libraries ?

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BOONS OF AN "INFORMAL" ECONOMY —

vehicle maintenance, belongs to them. Half the houses in Lima have been built by them. Between 1960 and 1984, where the state invested $ 173 6 million in low-income housing, the black-marketeers' contribution was $ 8319.8 million (47 times what the state spent). The figures are indicative in themselves.

This is just the first part of the story that De Soto has to tell. After an introductory chapter that traces the massive migration from the countryside to the city, the migration being a rational assessment by the rural population of the opportunities open to them, their painful discovery that they were unwelcome, and their conversion from migrants to informals — De Soto details the story of how nearly a third of the real wealth and services in Peru came to be accounted for by the informals. The story is one of the construction of 'another Peru', not just of the creation of wealth but of how the informals. rather than surrendering to anarchy, developed their own laws and institutions— what he calls 'extra-legal norms'.

The next three chapters present many empirical details on informal housing, trade and transport. With a skill rivalling that of a novelist, the auothor takes the readers through the various stages of informality.

If legal housing starts with the legal acquisition of land, its development and finally the building of a shelter, the informals reverse the process. The first phase is the occupation of property either by gradual or violent acquisition or through illegal purchase of agricultural land and rapidly constructing a shelter. We are taken through the details of organization and planning, the role of professional invaders, the evolving of the 'invasion contract' as the basis of the extra-legal norms, the building-up of an 'expective property right', the evolution of organisations to plan, develop and protect the property, leading finally to improving the first round shelter construction. Each sub-stage is marked by both the evolution and enforcement of norms, but equally importantly, the costs of illegality.

OUTSIDE THE SYSTEM—SHORT TIME HORIZONS

It is this constant referral to the costs of being 'outside the system'—the difficulties of developing systems of rental or property development or the limits to informality, that keep the narrative from slipping into a hagiography of the informal. The message is clear. People will violate a system that does not accept them, not because they can live in anarchy, but so that they can build a system which respects a minimum essential of rights. In the process, we can witness a steady retreat of the 'state', for eventually, each of these settlements acquires legality and becomes the responsibility of municipal authorities. The story then is not one of Marxian utopia of collective ownership, but one of enhancing and safeguarding the private property so acquired.

The stories of informal trade and transport are similar, except that in the transport sector, the all-pervasive informality does not necessarily lead to an increase in public good. True, that more services are thus made available, but constantly keeping transport operators and capital illegal, implies a process of use that leads to an increase in the number of accidents. Short-time horizons lead to low maintenance, over-crowding, speeding — all ills that we are all familiar with. The greater tragedy is that the normal public demand to such a situation – that of nationalisation, is inevitably seen as too costly. So the Third World commuters, under the current dispensation, seem condemned to suffer costly and unsafe transportation.

GOOD LAWS & BAD

De Soto traces most of these processes and the ills to the role of law in determining the efficiency of the economic activities it regulates. This he does by distinguishing between good and bad laws, the latter impeding it The unnecessary costs of formality derive fundamentally from a bad law; the costs of informality result from the absence of a good law. These are further broken up into 'costs of access' and 'costs of remaining'. The data cited in the beginning of this note relate to the costs of access. What is instructive here for the reader is the bludgeoning manner in which the details of each step towards access is worked out– leading to an inescapable conclusion that–regulations create the incentives for choosing the path of informality. Having once acquired access does not mean the end of problems, for the regulation and taxation structures, what is called the costs of remaining formal, follow. These are examples of bad law.

COSTS OF BEING INFORMAL

Equally important are the costs of informality. From avoiding detection and penalties (under-capitalizing business, not advertising, not entering markets, all the way to corruption); the costs of transactions which involve much higher interest rates; the costs of evading taxes and labour laws--the informals too, both as individuals and as citizens, pay a heavy price.

Most crucially, this absence of good law places a heavy cost on society for informals, in the absence of reliable property rights, use resources inefficiently; the mobility of their resources is restricted; and they cannot engage in collective projects. Further, their earnings, rather than going into durable investments, are channelised into easy consumables *viz* in illegal slums, there will be no investment on sanitation, but TV sets are not uncommon. Be it the inability to use the contract system, the wastage of resources into 'developing contacts,' the lack of insurance facilities--and one can go on endlessly—the national economic consequences of the costs of formality and informality are declining productivity, reduced investment, inefficiency of the tax system, increased utility rates, limited technological progress—all leading to major difficulties in the making

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of macro-economic policy. To put it sharply, De Soto computes that in 1985, Peru was 28.7 per cent richer than what its national accounts indicated; that unemployment and under-employment were over-estimated, as probably was inflation, since many of the low-cost informal transactions do not appear on any book.

REDISTRIBUTION *VS* CREATION OF WEALTH

This brings us to the final segment of the De Soto thesis. His real attack is on the belief, widely shared amongst policy-making elites in the Third World, that the name of the game is to design laws to redistribute wealth rather than help create it. It is the power of the 'redistributive combines' in essentially what he calls the 'mercantalist state' which leads to the proliferation of venal laws. And this comes about not just because the legal mind-set is conditioned by a concern for protecting the elite, but also because in most of our countries, laws are made by the executive without genuine democratic participation. Consequently, protecting privileges becomes a major source of income. And since the State pervades into all spheres of life, politics gets reduced to privatising it, and making pecuniary gains.

A PROJECT FOR DEMOCRACY

It is thus that De Soto argues that democracy — genuine economic and political democracy — should form the historical project of the times. Instead of a proliferation of private and public bureaucracies, the need is to free the people for 'decent markets' to start functioning. And this, according to him, is already happening as a result of the praxis of informals in Peru. Of course, none of this is without an accompanying violence, because neither the entrenched combines nor the legal system which protects and natures them, can take kindly to this undermining. But the end result is no longer in doubt.

De Soto argues about the invisible informal revolution in a manner similar to that of Simon Schama who argued in his monumental work on the French Revolution that 'Revolutions, genuine revolutions, not those which simply change the politieal forms and members of the government, but those which transform institutions and alter property relations, advance unseen for a long time before bursting into the sunlight impelled by some fortuitous circums tances'.

AGENDA FOR CHANGE

The old order simply has no option but to come to terms with the informals. The question is only whether the needed changes can be made so that violence and a total subversion of all norms do not become the fate of the country. The issue is not the usual 'right-left divide', which though impelled by different ideologies and interests, end up prescribing and doing virtually the same thing, but of seeing informality not as the 'problem', but as the 'solution' in the making.

Help popular initiative grow and prosper and you will have a growing and prosperous economy. Ensure firm property rights, reliable transactions, secure activities, facilitative legal instruments and simplify and decentralise the government—and you have De Soto's agenda for change. Take care that all legislation is transparent and involves consultation with the people. Only then can we move towards a system of rules and laws that are respected.

THE INDIAN SCENE

There is much in what De Soto argues for Peru that we can recognise in our own country. Unfortunately, only part of what he is saying is likely to find favour in the currently heady climate of liberalization and opening-up. For let us not forget that many of these words and concepts have been appropriated by the Thatcherites of today. It is equally true that in our country, we are also subjected to a 'planned creation of a type of informality', where the state vacates 'spaces' for the criminals to take over; and what we call here the "informal sector", ends up serving as the cheap, unregulated and exploitative underside umblically linked to the formal sector.

Yet, what cannot be denied is that much of what is today 'illegal' is neither criminal nor socially undesirable. Not all of India's garangutan black money economy is accounted for by drugs and prostitution. Much of it is in the production of real goods and services, which if accounted for, is likely to push up our GDP growth by more than a couple of percentage points. The thousands of small production shops, the real shortage of skilled labour of all types — are a fact which stare every citizen in the face, and yet escape the policy-maker, which is one of the great puzzles of cognition.

If only our well-cocooned liberals could realize that the horrific conditions in the cities are not just a pestilence, but also the locales for a new impetus of growth, they might then put pressure for dismantling the oppressive regimen that forces these producers to live in miserable conditions. Instead of working on ways to push people back into a countryside that obviously cannot sustain them, it might be more useful to think how they can be integrated into a 'legal' urban setting.

Without minimising any of the dozens of problems that a more complex situation like India throws up, and which a De Soto has not even touched, what we can be grateful to him for is in his pointing out, and so elegantly, the need not to be governed by either pre-fabricated or knee-jerk reactions, but for a change to open our eyes and see what is actually going on around us. Then, we too, may be in a position to talk of the *Other Path* for India.

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. . . and finally Gandhi

Avijit Pathak : JOURNEY TOWARDS THE SACRED

Writers' Workshop Calcutta (1990) 137 pp, Rs. 150/-

Comments by Jaidev

Avijit Pathak's book is composed of essays on themes as varied as terrorism on the one hand and technology on the other, love on the one hand and communism on the other.

A YOUTHFUL & IMPULSIVE VOICE

The essays hold together very well. This is because the young, exuberant, if also troubled, personality of the journalist-author pervades them all. Style is the man; it is also style which sustains trains of thought otherwise hardly original or spectacular. This is not a criticism, for there is a virtue in expressing well what is often thought by a great many good and intelligent young ones in this country. Pathak's is a youthful style, and it is engaging. Its weakness is typical of youth : there is an oceanic impulse which wants to settle infinitely complex matters once and for all, with a few flourishes of pen This impulse is most visible in the essays on violence and terrorism which are both demystified only for remystifying.

Pathak is a good representative of our bright intelligent youth. He has read Freud, Jung, Gramsci, Eco, Foucault, Said, Marx. Not only this, he wishes to avoid fetishizing them; and seeks to relate them to the disquieting realities that assail him from all sides. The theories do not provide a convincing, matching key to the realities; but then, when did they provide one ? They, of course, provide paradigms. Added to these are Pathak's good intentions and a serious, honourable desire to break the alienation the intellectuals suffer from, because of their infinitely knowledgeable impotence.

Pathak mentions the need for a dialogue between varied ideologies—communism, religion, Gandhism, and so on. The book encourages the reader to initiate—both within and without—a dialogue on numerous crucial social and political issues.

SIX ISSUES : AMBITIOUS AGENDA

It is an expensive book, and presumably Pathak will not misunderstand if its agenda-like character is reduced in this short review to a more agenda-like, issue-wise summary, for the purpose of enabling those readers to start the dialogue who would not be able to buy the book.

The *first* item is about seeing reality, history, time—and this seeing needs to be from the point of view of the more or less invisible, devisibilized, marginalised masses of our country. Their silent, mute heroism and poetry need to be seen and appreciated.

The *second* item relates to repressions, both private and societal, and Pathak's point is that these repressions engender violence and terrorism—an argument based on the theories of Freud and Fromm.

The *third* major issue in the book is the state of our culture and the role of media, including mass-media, in trivializing it.

The *fourth* item is about the need to problematize modernity and progress, for these have developed vested interests, but are by no means values *per se*.

The *fifth* is the situation of women and the false ideology of liberation which only seeks to reverse sexual roles, without at all breaking the vicious power equation that has characterised sexual politics in this country.

Finally, there is the issue of an *alternative* mode of thought—Nehruism *vs*. Gandhism—and Pathak asserts the need of an alternative praxis which will redefine religion, God, marriage, sexuality, life-styles, practically everything. It is quite an ambitious agenda, and one must appreciate the impulse behind preparing it.

REACHING THE PEOPLE ...

I can make only two points in this regard. The first is about the importance of journalism in this country. There are two broad categories of journalism we have in our country One is irresponsible, if also at times glamorised, and celebrates consumerism and commodification It is difficult to fight its power, but it is necessary all the same to try to. Pathak's essays were originally written for newspapers and magazines: and they are all representative of this noble attempt. Also, it is possible only in journalism to reach out to people, to get heard or read. For, the remarkable mountain of academic, researchly publications we see growing, day in day out, has little chance of being read by people. It lies congealed on the undisturbed library shelves—at people's expense. Pathak holds a Ph.D and desrves congratulations for escaping the burden of Ph.D. in his essays. His is a common, sensible voice—and it is far more valuable than the futile, footnoted noise our Ph.D's make. It seems scholarship in this country signifies alienation; journalism can be an antidote.

... AND REACHING GANDHI

The country is divided also between people who think and those who cannot, or do not wish to think, the latter unfortunately turning thoughtful only when self-interest is at stake, much like a predator. Those who think in an intelligent fashion read the Freud, Jung, Goffman, Marx, Gramsci, Nehru, etc., but if they persist and are sincere, are eventually led to reassess Gandhi who alone seems to suggest a decent, moral way out of our myriad traps.

One hopes so much from the new generation, and one hopes that it will find in Gandhi a presence who can help both itself and the nation. Above all, it will discover that Gandhi's entire career was praxis, acti-

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TAGORE AND THE WORLD

by Subhash Chandra Sarker

Rabindranath Tagore on the world debt question ? This may surprise many (!) . . Unfortunately we know so little about Rabindranath Tagore, despite the fact that he is perhaps one of the most readily recognisable Indian names, both within the country and outside. Tagore is the most conspicuous example of how celebrity, even when it is fully deserved, can result in generating obscurity. Tagore is undoubtedly famous and yet he is so little known even to the highly educated. Yet, in coping with today's predicaments, Tagore still remains a very dependable and wise guide.

TAGORE—A POLITICAL MAN

Rabindranath Tagore was not a politician, nor was he a teacher of politics in a college or a university. But, like all great men in all countries, he was an intensely political man. His political interests cut across national boundaries.

He led a procession on the streets of Calcutta to protest against the first partition of Bengal in 1905. He renounced his knighthood in protest against the Jalianwalabagh massacre of 1919. He took up cudgels against the continued detention of political prisoners. He defended the national freedom movement against the calumny spread by British politicians, taking advantage of the fact that all the recognised Indian political leaders had been put in Jail by the then British Government in India.

His last public address, a few weeks before his death in 1941, was a ringing denunciation of the two-hundred years of British rule in India He warned against the appeasement of the aggressors and said in one of his poems. "*Naginira dike dike felitechhe bishakta Nishwas/Shantir lalit bani shunaibe byartha parihas*" (Snakes are spitting venom all around; it would be the height of mockery to talk of peace under the circumstances).

EUROPE'S IMPERIAL FACE

Early in this century he recognised the true face of European imperialism for what is was—a plunderer of other nations. "The truth is that the spirit of conflict and conquest is at the centre of Western nationalism; its basis is not social co-operation....it is like the pack of predatory creatures that must have its victims....In fact these nations are fighting among themselves for the extension of their victims and their reserve forests....And we cannot but acknowledge this paradox that while the spirit of the West marches under its banner of freedom, the Nation of the West forges its iron chains of organisation which are the most relentless and unbreakable that have ever been manufactured in the whole history of man". Rabindranath Tagore wrote in 1916, when the First World War was raging most ferociously in Europe. How many contemporary European politicians, including the Marxists, at that time had put forward such a clear-cut characterisation of the roots of war in the political system evolved in the West ?

HUMAN LIBERATION

He was able to point to the standards of development in the West : One is toward human liberation through harnessing technology to fulfil the needs of man; the other is the harnessing of the very same technology to put man in chains. In this inhuman craze for domination, there is no consideration for the people of even one's own country, as is to be seen now in the rampant but entirely avoidable unemployment in the countries of Europe and North America that is degrading the quality of human beings themselves. Instead of the condition of the common man improving with economic progress, their condition is deteriorating not only in the poor countries, but also in the rich industrial countries including Japan, which is now-a-days tomtommed as an example to be emulated. Gone is the certainty of life-long employment for the Japanese workers for which the Japanese industrial management has been rightly praised in all other countries which were apparently unable to cope with the problem of unemployment. Despite economic growth, Japan faces domestic unemployment when the nation is at the height of its prosperity now.

A WARNING TO SOVIET UNION

Even about the Soviet Union, which impressed him tremendously on his visit to that country in 1930, because he found that country's government seeking to end the misery of the common man that characterised the economy in all other countries. He saw clearly the dialectics in operation and uttered a warning which rings prophetic today after six decades. He was deeply distressed by the authoritarian streak in the socio-political system in the Soviet Union in those days.

As usual with the characteristically non-analytical mentality of our intellectuals, particularly of the Marxist intellectuals (who swear by dialectics but have never provided any evidence of ever having been able to provide a dialectical analysis of the situation in India, or for that matter of any international situation !), Tagore, if not very harshly criticised, was reprimanded nevertheless for his supposed failure to perceive the demands of the revolutionary situation in the Soviet Union and elsewhere, justifying the imposition of a dictatorship in the Soviet Union.

In a statement issued on 25 September, 1930, Tagore requested the leaders of the Soviet Union to reconsider the dictatorial rule in that country. "But I find certain contradictions to the great mission which you have undertaken. Certain attitudes of mind are being cultivated which are contrary to your ideal," he

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TAGORE AND THE WORLD

said. Proceeding further, Tagore warned the Soviet leaders, "If you dwell too much upon the evil elements in your opponents and assume that they are inherent in human nature meriting eternal damnation, you inspire an attitude of mind which, with all its contents of hatred and revengefulness, may some day react against your own ideal and destroy it. You are working for a great cause and, therefore, you must be great in your mind, great in your mercy."

Within a few years of this warning against the dictatorial practices, which the Soviet leaders did not consider it necessary to heed (as is the wont of rulers in all countries not to heed well-meant criticism), the Soviet Union became the victim of the so-called "trials", in which leader after leader of the Russian Revolution, whose entire life had been spent in working for the victory of the Russian Revolution, were executed as enemies of the Soviet system. The Soviet Government and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) have already publicly announced that in many cases, the leaders had been wrongly framed and killed through a farcical trial.

Tagore's "*Letters from Russia*" remained an anathema with the Russians, who carefully avoided all references to this most illuminating analysis of the Soviet system from anywhere else in the world. (Compare, for example, the writings of the British Fabians, Sydney and Beatrice Webb, whose magnum opus, *Soviet Union—A New Civilisation*, remained the Bible with the Communists, but which no Communist with any sense would now own up as dependable.)

Although Tagore was not a professional political writer, he was capable to see the essence of a political situation unerringly. This needs to be underscored in any discussion of Tagore.

SECOND WORLD WAR : POWER DOMINATION VS DEMOCRACY

Tagore had a very clear perception of the power struggle that was the Second World War (1939–1945). He unerringly traced how the so-called "democratic" powers like Great Britain had supported, at any rate condoned, the aggression of the Fascist powers like Italy and Japan against country after country. He specifically mentioned the Italian aggression against Ethiopia (then known as Abyssinia) and Albania, and the German occupation of Austria and Czechoslovakia and the toppling of the democratically elected Government of Spain by General Franco with the enthusiastic support from Germany and Italy, the two Fascist powers of Europe in those days. Nearer home, he mentioned the Japanese aggression against Manchuria in China which pained him most.

He, of course, was so much aghast at the brutality of the fascist powers like Germany, Italy and Japan that he still wished victory for the England-France combination in that war.

After the fall of Paris to the German forces in 1940, Rabindranath Tagore issued a public statement requesting the Government of the United States of America to intervene in the war against Germany. It has to be remembered that the US intervention in the war against Germany was still far away, and no cultural leader outside the USA had thought of appealing to the President of the USA (at that time Franklin Delano Roosevelt) to intervene in the war on behalf of England and France. So alert was Tagore about the dynamics of world politics.

ON INTERNATIONAL DEBT

Take, for the instance, the international debt question. Discussing the problem in the mid-thirties, when the debtor nations were not the poor countries but rich countries like Britain, France and Germany and the creditor was the USA (as now), Tagore wrote, in his essay, *Kalantar* (Changing Age) :

"England, France and Germany are today indebted to America. Their debt is doubtless heavy. But had it been even double of what it is, it would have been quite possible to pay it off. If the debtor countries had been content with the mere maintenance of law and order and got rid of all compunction in cutting down their standard of life in every other way....But since such a course would have been wholly incompatible with the character of their civilisation, we have witnessed the spectacle of their repudiation of these debts."

Turning to India he said, "Should it not be open to the people of India, on the same ground of their paramount right to the bare decencies of life, to protest against the continuance of the heavy burden of debt incurred by the intolerably expensive regime which keeps her condemned to barbarous conditions ?"

Is there not a direct relevance to the current world problem in this observation of Tagore ?

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(*Contd from page 14*) **. . . and finally Gandhi**

vism of the highest order. Gandhi may not be enough, but he is indispensable for anyone who would like to see and understand and help India. Our problems are ours, of our making, and Gandhi might not solve them for us. But still it requires only a sensitive, empathic, intuitive leap to see how Gandhi would have responded to our predicament, and of course, mitigated it. This is no sentimentalism. Gandhi's way is the only way to salvation.

This might sound strange even for a book which has its opening epigraph from Marx, but really the kind of dialogue Pathak advocates in his book might well find Gandhi and Marx reconcilable.

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INDIAN ROCK ART — A Seminar Report

by

Vijai Kumar

A national seminar on Indian Rock Art was organised by the Rastriya Manav Sangrahalya (R.M.S.), Bhopal on 7th–9th January 1991. Its theme was Documentation, Preservation and Popularisation of Rock Paintings. Apart from Indian participants, scholars from Italy and France also participated. The Italian scholars organised an exhibition on the rock art of Volcamonica, while R.M.S. organised an open air and gallery exhibition. Film shows on Indian, French and Italian Rock Art were also arranged.

CULTURAL RECORDS OF EARLY HUMANS

Rock paintings have proved valuable in reconstructing the cultural history of the human race. Bold strokes in red, ochre, white, yellow and green shades on the walls and ceilings of rock-shelters tell us an interesting story about the environment in which the early humans had spent their life : the struggles they faced to exist; the beliefs they evolved to live a successful and happy life; the ways in which they enjoyed their spare time and the inventions they made to overcome the tasks of their hard life, and to make themselves superior to the other species of the living world. Above all, through these figures, we may have a peep into the aesthetic aspects of the life led by people in the remote past.

DISCOVERIES IN INDIA & SPAIN

The first discovery of rock paintings in India was made 12 years before their discovery at Altamira in Spain. India was also the first country to recognise the antiquity of rock paintings.

In spite of this first discovery, as early as the seventies of the last century by Carllyle, Cockburn and important contribution made by D. H. Gordon and other Indian and foreign scholars, the outside world is still ignorant of the immense work done in India. Recent discoveries made in Kashmir, Shiwaliks, Hills of Assam, Ghats of Tamil Nadu and Kerala, the boulder shelters of Gujarat, Andhra Fradesh, Orissa, Karnataka, the sand shelters of Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Himachal Pradesh show that there is hardly any Indian state left which is now not recorded in the country as a treasure house of rock paintings. How many in India are aware of and can appreciate these treasures ? One wonders.

NEED TO DOCUMENT & PRESERVE

During the seminar, inaugurated by Prof. B. B Lal, scholars expressed their concern over the fast decaying of rock art due to ecological imbalances and human encroachments There was a general consensus that, before everything is lost, documentation of the paintings must be completed. Shri Vikas Bhatta, Director of R.M S., assured all possible help in this regard. Recently a computer cell has been established in the R.M.S. and data will be stored in the computer. The super-imposition and colour analysis will also be possible here. The need for standardisation of documents and inventory was also discussed. Scholars engaged in rock art research will be provided this inventory free of cost.

The need for preservation of rock art was also emphasised. Since the rock art sites come under both the central and state governments, an appeal was made to the Archaeological Survey of India and State Archaeology Departments to immediately implement the programme of conservation and protection of these sites.

Human agency is one of the factors causing damage to the early rock art. It was proposed that the discipline should be popularised by organising popular lectures, film shows, exhibitions and publicity through press and electronic media. The importance of this national heritage should be explained to the young children by including the subject in their syllabus from the primary level.

RICH HERITAGE OF RAJASTHAN

Surprisingly, Rajasthan is very rich in the pictorial art tradition beginning from pre-historic times. It offers a practically continuous story as revealed from rock-shelters with paintings. Their discovery, preservation, chronological study and interpretation are the great need of the day, so that various unknown facets of our early cultural and aesthetic life can be unfolded. Equally necessary is to study and analyse the media upon which these paintings are drawn i.e. nature of rocks and the pigments used for their execution—so that chemical preservation may be carried out in the right manner to keep them 'alive' for the posterity.

Outstanding pre-historic paintings covering various stages of the Stone Ages and ranging from 30,000 B.C. to 3,000 B.C. have been discovered in different parts of Rajasthan, particularly in Kota, Jhalawar, Bhilwara, Chittorgarh, Sirohi, Ajmer, Sawai Madhopur, Jaipur, Udaipur, Pali and Bharatpur regions. These are 'untapped' source materials of our early history, which need detailed investigation and critical study.

Against this back-ground, Sarvashri P. L. Chakravarty and Vijai Kumar, participants from Rajasthan, stressed the need of a multi-disciplinary approach to the problems of documenting and preserving painted rock shelters in Rajasthan.

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RURAL DEVELOPMENT - WHOSE BUSINESS ?

Shiv Raj Singh
BUREAUCRACY AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
(Policy Making, Planning and Implementation)
Mittal Publications, New Delhi (1989), Pp. 335, Rs.300/-

Review by Smita Mehrotra

The book deals with a vital issue, that of Rural Development, which is no longer the exclusive domain of economists, and has to be understood from sociological, political and administrative perspectives as well. The author claims this study as the first of its kind, in which an appraisal of the role of bureaucracy in the rural development in the hill State of **Himachal Pradesh** is made.

STUDY AREA & HYPOTHESIS

The book has eight chapters, of which the first deals with the problem confronting the author, the hypotheses and methodology of the proposed study. It has been hypothesised that the existing bureaucratic structure in rural areas has failed to perform the task of rural development to the extent required. To provide empirical evidence, two districts of Himachal Pradesh, *viz.*, **Shimla** and **Sirmour** have been chosen. While Shimla is relatively developed, Sirmour is a backward district. A backward block from each of the selected district has been taken for conducting a survey. The rationale for choosing the study area in this manner seems to be the author's beliefs that rural development programmes require an altogether different approach for *different* areas.

The second chapter provides a detailed historical, political, economic, religious and socio-cultural profile of the State of Himachal Pradesh, followed by profiles of the districts of Shimla and Sirmour.

DISTRICT & BLOCK LEVEL BUREAUCRACY SOME ASPECTS

Chapter 3 explains the bureaucratic organisation at the District level with the hierarchy of officials listed down to the Block level. Commencing his enquiries from officials comprising of IAS, HPAS cadres, District Officers and Block Officers, the author states that,right from the top bureaucracy to the lower levels, all are in favour of a *neutral* bureaucracy—one that honestly carries out the policies of the party in power With regard to training facilities, it is revealed that there was a higher percentage of these facilities at the lower levels of bureaucracy as compared to top level. The reason given by the author is that since the District and Block bureaucracy is largely responsible for implementing various programmes, these officials or functionaries are required to keep their knowledge up-to-date in their respective fields, whereas the top bureaucracy, which is generalist in character, gets no specialised training for a particular field.

Chapter 4 deals with the concept of policy-making and the planning process at the Block and District levels.

In chapter 5, the author looks into the attitudinal orientation of bureaucrats, which is responsible for determining bureaucratic behaviour. This, in the author's view, is important as bureaucrats possess their own attitudes towards basic national values and, if these conflict with the development objectives set forth by the development schemes, their implementation is bound to suffer. The attitudes of bureaucrats have been ascertained with regard to questions or issues like possession of property and wealth, nationalisation of industries, power decentralisation, mixed economy, integrity and corruption etc Some findings which emerge are that the top and middle-level bureaucracy is against the nationalisation of big industries, and a large majority of officials has favoured decentralisation of power to the level of Panchayats. Also, a good number of officials admit that district administrators work under the influence of corrupt means, and there is lack of integrity among them.

ROLE PERCEPTION & PERFORMANCE

Chapter 6 deals with the 'role perception' and 'role performance of bureaucrats at block level' with respect to planning and policy formulation process and policy implementation. The interviews with officials lead the author to the conclusion that it is the top and middle bureaucrats who really participate in policy-making process. The lower categories of bureaucracy regard themselves as the implementing field agencies, and hardly play any role in policy moking process.

The major reasons cited for ineffective implementation of policies at district and block levels are the prevalence of corrupt practices, value confrontation and bureaucratic rigidity at the district level, and among other reasons, the non-involvement of local people in planning and implementation at the Block level.

These findings emerged from the different arrays of percentages given in *Table 6 7* of the book. The inferences drawn from the above are well-known *e.g.* (i) the bureaucracy needs reorientation and the (ii) the rules and regulations in use need to be more flexible to meet the exigencies of development administration, and (iii) people's participation, both in the planning and implementation process, is of utmost importance to ensure greater efficiency and speed in the implementation of the government policies.

C D PROGRAMME : RESPONSES & IMPACTS

Chapter 7 of the book discusses the role of bureaucracy in the social, economic and political development. The latter half of the chapter presents respondents' opinions about the impact of Community

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Development Programme on their living conditions. The sample consisted of forty beneficiaries each in Pachhad and Chopal blocks, forty non-beneficiaries in each block and twenty-five of elite group in each block. They were asked about their satisfaction with regard to : (i) educational facilities, (ii) health services, (iii) social welfare facilities, (iv) services of block level functionaries, (v) services of specialists from the horticulture and conservation department, (vi) availability of farm inputs, (vii) marketing faciliteis, (viii) availability of subsidised commodities and (ix) the performance of panchayats, co-operative societies, co-operative banks and commercial banks. Varied indicators have been used to adjudge the performance of bureaucracy in the two blocks.

CONCLUSIONS : *HEALTH SERVICES*

The conclusions as for example, with regard to *Health Services* are as follows : "If we take the total picture of these two blocks, we come to the conclusion that the over all performance of the health services was not to the people's expectations" *(p. 243)* However, turning to *Table 7.4*, one sees that out of 40 beneficiaries interviewed, 75 per cent affirmed the adequacy of doctors in Pachhad Block and 90 per cent in Chopal Block. Similarly, the adequacy of medicines is affirmed by 90 per cent beneficiaries in Pachhad and 100 per cent in Chopal Block. It seems surprising as to how the author has inferred that health services are not upto the expectations of people.

Similar procedures have been adopted to ascertain the adequacy of other services rendered by rural development functionaries. In a vast jungle of percentages indicating adequacy/inadequacy, it is very difficult to say anything definite,as sometimes respondents have shown their satisfaction with very high percentages and at times with low percentages.

Unless some weightage is ascribed to the various indicators used, it would be difficalt to perceive the performance of different services rendered by rural functionaries.

INADEQUATE FACILITIES

Nevertheless, the poor performance of certain services is apparently clear. Farmers in the area, specially horticulturists, are faced with appaling marketing facilities. The absence of link roads, paucity of wooden boxes and the apathy of the government were responsible for keeping production areas isolated and cut off from market centres. Similarly, opinion of respondents with respect to development of village industries and their impact on the economic condition of people has been adjudged by a few indicators, and the author comes to the conclusion that there is hardly any industrial growth in the two Blocks.

COMMENTS ON THE STUDY

Since the author has chosen two districts for the study, representing developed and backward areas, the conclusions should have been drawn on the basis of comprison of the two areas. However, no such comparison between the two districts has been indicated in chapter 8, entitled 'Conclusions and Recommendations'.

It is also not clear on what basis the sample units have been differentiated into 'beneficiaries' and 'non-beneficiaries' for purposes of the survey. The respondents have been subjected to innumerable questions, as is evident from *Annexure III*, and it is indeed surprising that they were able to reply to all queries, specially when many of them were illiterate farmers.

[A printing mistake, appears on *page 290* of the book, which states that, out of 42 lakhs of Himachalis, 88.64 lakhs live in villages. This should have heen 38.64 lakhs, as 92 per cent of 42 lakh persons in Himachal Pradesh live in villages.]

On the whole, the book is a comprehensive and balanced presentation of theoretical and behavioural aspects of bureaucracy, policy-making and planning, and their relation with rural development programmes. But how far the study has been able to justify its original contribution in the field of behavioural aspects of bureaucracy and its role in the rural development of hill areas is questionable, because the conclusions reached are simply generalisations, and do not seem to be peculiar to the State of Himachal Pradesh alone.

Ms. Smita Mehrotra is UGC Senior Research Fellow, Department of Economics, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur [*Delay in publication is regretted*—Eds]

Is There A Way Out ?

For many years now, IBC has been a small victim of the crisis of confidence, of inefficiency and escapism, lack of direction and drift which has enveloped our "developing" society. How else to explain these recurring delays by our printers ? Again and again, our best intentions and efforts come to nought!

Worse, and more serious now, is this mounting spiral of rising costs, what with stagflation on one hand and devaluation on the other ! Soon we may be priced out of the world of books and become a book-less, paper-less society !

Hardly had this journal regained some strength when these dark clouds are threatening its existence.

Is there any escape from the doom ? Is there a way out ....? Towards light and life !

May we leave these burning questions with our readers, our well-wishers, all those who are fond of books and those in the trade — the poets and writers, scholars and critics, teachers and librarians, publishers and distributors ! The answer . . . and the key to our survival is in their hands ! —*Editors*

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FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

Phani Bhusan Chakraborty & Brojen Bhattacharya
NEWS BEHIND NEWSPAPERS—
A Study of Indian Press
Minerva Associates (Publications) Pvt. Ltd., Calcutta (1989) Pp. 142; Rs. 100/-

Review by Kewal Khanna

"*News Behind Newspapers*" is a study of the Indian Press dedicated to those who want to know the truth about today's press. Can a journalist exercise the right on his own? The authors have gone into depth by exposing fearlessly the defects in the system which have brought down the glorious past of the Fourth Estate from its high pedestal of truth and impartiality. Today the Fourth Estate is being used to serve more the interests of the powers that hold office or high business and industry than that of the society and people at large.

The book contains 142 pages divided into eight chapters covering the Role of the Press and its growth into a giant industry from the early phase of mission.

DURING THE EMERGENCY

In the chapter "Emergency & Press", the authors have woven the impact on the people due to suspension of democratic rights granted by the Indian Constitution and how the Press could be muzzled. Actual incidents pertaining to killing of news stories, censorship on the press, clashes in Jama Masjid area, transfer of High Court judges and score of other incidents have been summarised in this chapter, concluding as to what extent the press was muzzled and democratic rights crushed. The incidents and happenings just make one shiver, reminding one of the 'Horrors of Dracula'.

PRESS LAWS

The chapter on "the Press and the Law" deals with various laws and measures introduced from the days of East India Company to the present day, specially the Official Secrets Act, first introduced by the British Government in 1869, which underwent substantial changes. Not only this Act, there have been other methods of denying freedom to the press through parliamentary privileges and the threats of legal proceedings for alleged contempt of court and civil and criminal libels.

IN THE FREEDOM STRUGGLE

'Glorious Traditions' of the Indian Press of yesteryears against oppression and repression of the 'Raj' have been narrated, which appears to be the role of 'Fourth Estate' in India's struggle for Independence. The contribution of Urdu newspaper '*Swarajya*' published from Allahabad, and the weeklies like *Bangabasi*, *Barishal*, *Hitaishi* and *Sanjibani* edited by Krishan Kumar Mitra played a vital role, There were other newspapers like *Ananda Bazar Patrika*, which had a humble beginning in 1922 and was inspired from i very beginning by the mission of making the paper a instrument of carrying the message of non-cooperatio Not only in India, but newspapers published by India abroad roused the people of India for struggle, ev armed revolt. Sikh revolutionaries also brought ou clandestine journal in the name of the party, *Ghada*

The concluding chapter contains the philosop and essence of what has been discussed and elabora in the rest of the book. An ideal newspaper should able to make both ends meet without conceding t journalistic integrity. Nationalism and patriotism h to be accepted as an integrated ideology. Today, need ideal newspapers which should search out t truth, and through their columns herald the restorati of world peace, an end to armed confrontations, d fence of individual froodom and human rights. Th should promote national and international understa ding for growth and development.

GANDHI'S ADVICE

Mahatma Gandhi had been a great and proficie journalist and, through his '*Young India*' and "*Harij* always endeavoured to motivate the masses of ev hue and colour to act and initiate activities for hum welfare, understanding and cooperation. It w Gandhiji who said, "One of the objects of a newspap is to understand popular feelings and give expressi to it; another is to rouse among people certain desira sentiments and yet the other is to expose fearles popular defects."

MIRROR & STRENGTH OF SOCIETY

The authors, who are distinguished journal having a four decade of active association with Ind newspapers and journals, have provided an inside st of the news which make a newspaper. Press is mirror of a society, and when Edmund Burke refer to the Press as the Fourth Estate, the newspapers started wielding tremendous influence on the matter State. Mr Chakrabarty and Mr. Bhattacharya h analysed at length the instances of the power the P wields in the affairs of the State. Even it is said t American Press today is the actual arm of the Amer industry.

ETERNAL VIGILANCE

John Stuart Mill long ago echoed, "Eternal V lance is the price of liberty", and of all the liber the freedom to know, speak and criticise is the c important. But if knowledge of what is happenin withheld from the people or projected to an extent form which caters to the needs and interests of rulers, no public opinion can be formed and the m towards democracy is retarded.

The authors, by their wide experience have, cluded that a handful of press barons decide what majority of the newspaper readers should be told e

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morning. The policy of the newspapers is determined by the proprietors who own big chains and groups. The observations of Pulitzer, after whom a well-known prize of great prestige for outstanding contribution to journalism is named, are of great importance. Once he said, "There is not a crime, there is not a vice which does not have to face the light of the day. Get these things out in the open, describe them, attack them, ridicule them in the Press; sooner or later, public opinion will sweep them away".

The book is full of vital information and one gets fully absorbed in finishing it in one sitting. It is recommended for students of journalism, public relations and newsmen. The authors have depicted the Indian Press scenario from pre-independence era to *pre* and after the Emergency period. In the ultimate analysis, the authors have a firm conviction that those who are in the noble profession of journalism will rise to the occasion and make the Indian Press a true mirror of society.

PRESSURES

The authors, without naming the correspondent, have narrated an incident which is worth mentioning here for the magnanmity of the rulers who believed in democratic values :

"A journalist used to write a regular weakly letter from the capital for a daily and had a sad experience though he kept his employer in good humour. During Mrs. Indira Gandhi's tenure as Minister for I & B in Shastri Cabinet, (1965–66), he had written that Mrs. Gandh would have to clear the 'Augeans table' with an iron hand, and had referred to All India Radio as All Hindi Radio in a particular context. Some one picked up a few lines from the story out of context and submitted a garbled version to Mrs. Gandhi who was terribly annoyed. She told her Secretary to write to the virtual proprietor of the daily who was also the editor of the newspaper that she would not be able to attend the lunch that was to be given by the All India Newspaper Editors Conference to a Commonwealth Delegation of Editors. When the Editor came to know of it, he was non-plussed and rushed to Delhi from Calcutta. He called for the correspondent and told him that he would be dismissed from service unless he was able to persuade Mrs. Gandhi to accept the invitation. The correspondent explained that he had not written anything to incur the displeasure of Mrs. Gandhi, but the agitated editor was not prepared to listen.

"It was with much difficulty that the correspondent succeeded in his pleadings and told the editor that some way out would be found. The correspondent contacted the Secretary of I & B and explained his dilemma. The Secretary was sympathetic, and an early morning audience was arranged. With folded hands, the correspondent craved Mrs. Gandhi's indulgence to read out the article in question. As he waited with trepidations, the Secretary explained to Mrs. Gandhi that he had read the story and that there was nothing objectionable in it. Mrs. Gandhi looked at the correspondent and asked with a flicker of smile, "If I accept the invitation, you will not lose your job. Is that so?" The correspondent murmured, "Yes Madam". She asked the Secretary to write to the editor saying that she was accepting the invitation."

Now a financial manager in the Government at Jaipur Mr. Kewal Khanna began his working life as a journalist.

A FIRST COLLECTION

Chitra Narasimhan : CARVED NICHES (Poems)
Writers' Workshop, Calcutta

Review by Anurag Sharma

Chitra Narasimhan's first collection of poems—*Carved Niches*—gives the reader the impression of a romantic-confessional poet in the line of early 19th centuary poets, and to some extent of S. Plath in modern times. Quite often, she reminds us of Emily Dickenson with metaphysical leanings resulting from an eye made sombre by experiencing the contrast between the beauty of Nature and the ugliness of human nature.

> They exit side by side—
> The bathing-ghats, where an infant
> Has his first holy dip, and
> The burning-ghats where he too
> Must one day be consigned to flames. (*pp. 34*)

She writes of Varanasi—an ancient city with "the stark squalor of nearby slums" and "mercurial masses."

Though not yet 30, Chitra Narasimhan's Poems are not juvenile poems from any angle whatsoever. It is really strange that, as she herself says, it is "Shelley who did transport me/Into springs of fancy", and that "Keats never appealed to me". But quite paradoxically, her poems are more Keatsian with chiselled images, concrete metaphors and statuesque roundness of phrases, than Shelleyan in any sense of epithet.

'*Barred Dreams*' can be one example:

> A glaring light bores into their skulls
> Where grey visions dance a ghastly ball. (*pp. 14*)

And her grandmother's face is one on which "Time has softly moulded/Wrinkles as those on dry dates."

Human psyche is a complex phenomenon. The futility of human existence is realised and felt most intensely when one is young, when all is life-buxom, blithe and debonair. There is nothingness at the centre of human existence—believes Sartre; and Chitra, in a fit of paranoia feels :

(*Contd. overleaf Co. I*)

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ROLE OF UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

COMMONWEALTH VC'S MEET

—A Brief Report

The 1991 Conference of Executive Heads of Commonwealth Universities was held in Delhi from Jan. 14 to 18, when 227 University Vice-Chancellors, Presidents, Rectors and Directors from over 20 countries of the Commonwealth were the guests of the Association of Indian Universities.

In his inaugural address, the President of India reminded the Vice-Chancellors of the expectations which the society had of them and lamented the diminution of public confidence in the university system. Society, he said, needed assurance that the considerable public investment in the university was being wisely and carefully used. They should always aim at the reconciliation of both the quality, to which universities were traditionally committed, and the need to provide more equitable access to those who had so far been denied access to university education.

The Minister for Human Resources Development, Shri Raj Mangal Pande welcomed the opportunity which the conference offered to the universities to reflect upon the extent to which, individually or collectively, they had succeeded in implementing the changes in attitudes and policies with which they had to grapple over recent decades. Rapid changes in society, he felt, demanded but did not always receive flexible response.

Earlier in his welcome address, Prof. Ramlal Parikh, President of the Association of Indian Universities, said that in an era of development, education cannot, and indeed should not be, divorced from social development. He stressed the Gandhian philosophy of education as a process of harmonising three *H's*–Head, heart and hand. Higher Education anywhere, he said, needs to achieve reconciliation of this, if it is to sustain its relevance in the midst of diverse challenges that the contemporary world is facing.

Prof. A Naimark, Vice Chancellor, University of Manitoba, Canada proposed a vote of thanks.

KEYNOTE ADDRESSES

After the formal inauguration in the first plenary session, keynote addresses were presented by Prof. M. S. Gore, former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bombay and Prof. Rais Ahmed, former Vice-Chairman, University Grants Commission.

Prof. Gore reviewed the history of the socio-economic developments in India since independence. The growth in population, rise in the expectation of life and in literacy had posed challenges which education had still to meet in full. Prof. Rais Ahmed, on the other hand, pointed to the notable increase in research and to the considerable inroads made by modern technology. He, however, noted with concern the decline in standards.

PROBLEMS & CHALLENGES

In the second plenary session, some noted Indian educationists spoke about the problems regarded as international in dimensions and application, and how they had been encountered and tackled. Prof. M.G.K. Menon, (former Minister of State for Science and Technology, Government of India), Dr. Malcolm S. Adiseshiah, (Chairman, Madras Institute of Development Studies, Madras and former Deputy Director-General, Unesco), Prof. S.K. Khanna, (Vice-Chairman, University Grants Commission) and Prof. Sukhdev Singh, (former Vice-Chancellor of the Punjab Agricultural University) were the main speakers.

Prof. Menon argued that an emphasis on quantitative expansion had precluded proper attention to excellence and relevance. The fundamental question of family environment as an aid or handicap to advanced study had never been properly tackled. Size had demanded standardisation and precluded flexibility, he said.

A FIRST COLLECTION (*Contd. from page 21*)

I'm a vast arid desert
Drained of all impulses
Deadened to the core;
A solitary barren rock
That crumbles into dust
And finally into faded obscurity. (*pp. 20*)

The locale of most of her poems is Varanasi and the emotional centre—herself. Poems like '*My School*' '*A Toothy Tale*', '*Grandmother's Bed-time Stories*' are not only subjective but autobiographical.

Very often there is a morbid Eliotesque satire in her poems. In the poem '*Cocktail*', the lines—'Yoga, Krishna, Freud cry/Through the lips of a chiffon butterfly' recall 'in the room the women come and go Talking of Michelangelo' in Eliot's *Prufrock*.

To some extent, Chitra has been, wherever she has tried, successful in creative verse pragraphs, at times with rhymes. But what is most remarkable is the freshness of images like "a far-off horn/Pierces the dense air"/"a mercurial voice rents the air,"/"a row of impatient feet/Fled to the sun-drenched terrace,"/"a cruel clump of thorny cacti", etc. A good scholar, she revels in metaphysical conciets comparing life with a perfumed cigarette and human beings a contrifuge, to be tossed into atoms and molecules.

Through the book, Chitra Narsimhan has succeeded in carving out a niche for herself in the temple of poetry.

Sh. Anurag Sharma is in the Deptt. of English, Dayanand P. G. College, Ajmer.

[Delay in publication is regretted—*Eds.*]

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ROLE OF UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

Dr. Adiseshiah spoke of higher education as, in fact, a process involving a transfer of income from the poor to the rich. It was time for higher education to pause, to take stock of its role and look fundamentally at questions of gender and location etc.

Prof. Khanna stressed the need for efficiency in sectors like higher education administration, financing of higher education, manpower including faculty, student/scholar and support staff, and academic programme and planning. He felt that, if any of these components was inefficient, it will result in either a contemporary crisis or disruption of academic calendar and irrelevance in the education content.

Prof. Sukhdev Singh traced the growth of development of agricultural universities and highlighted innovative characteristics in the structure and the scope of their functioning. He identified these as a strong sense of social relevance, a mission-oriented spirit in research endeavours, and an integrated approach to teaching, research and extension education.

Chairman, University Grants Commission, Prof. Yash Pal also spoke on the occasion and referred to the poor linkage which universities had so far achieved with society, and made a powerful plea for closer involvement of the universities in the achievement of societal goals.

ISSUES & NEW POLICIES

After the presentation of papers followed by panel discussion, the conference divided into five groups to hold concurrent discussions on the sub-themes of the general theme of the conference—"*Issues in and the Development of Higher Education—Are New Policies Succeeding* ?"

In each group, lively and wide-ranging debate followed the presentation of the papers as Vice-Chancellors described their own experiences and the particular constraints of the government policies under which they were working. Social relevance, financial accountability, efficiency and effectiveness, and the special qualities by which university education might be identified were some of the recurring themes of the discussions.

The choice of topics showed how much in common the universities had by way of problems and challenges. Even so, the debate also showed a very lively awareness of their responsibility to society; and there was ample evidence of the extent to which they were already making a profound contribution to it in their production of highly trained manpower, in the developmental potential of their research, in the profound and the objective insights into society which that research already yields. There was a general conviction that none of these services to society would be possible without effective autonomy, which all see as one of the inextinguishable marks of a university.

GROUP REPORTS

Chairmen of these groups later reported on the discussions in their respective groups.

Prof. T.N.M. Waters (of the Massey University, New Zealand), who chaired the group on '*The role of Distance Education in achieving mass higher education at affordable cost without erosion of standards*' spoke of the role and importance of the distance education in taking education to a larger number of people, and suggested that a mix of distance and classroom education could be a solution.

Dr. D. W. Strangway (President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of British Columbia, Canada), who headed the group on '*Are opportunities for Mass Higher Education and excellence compatible* ?' said that excellence could not be sacrificed at any cost. What's the point of large numbers without excellence, he asked.

Prof. K.R. Mckinnon, (Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Wollongong, Australia), who led the group on '*What Organisational Forms and Structures are best suited to encourage Innovation and Change without compromising on accountability and standards*' stated that the university should become oriented to social needs and play a role in energising the society.

Prof. W. J. Kamba (Vice-Chancellor of the University of Zimbabwe, and Sir Edward Parkes, Vice-Chancellor, University of Leeds), headed the groups on '*Is higher education in developing countries a luxury or an essential means for their development* ?' and '*Why should universities be autonomous and can they remain so within new government strategies for funding and for development of higher education and research* ?' respectively.

[The conference of the Executive Heads of Commonwealth Universities is convened every 2½ years in one or another Commonwealth Country by the Association of Commonwealth Universities. The next Conference will be held on the occasion of the 15th Congress of the Commonwealth Universities being organised at Swansea in Wales on August 15-21 1993.]

Adapted from the Report published on Pp 23-24 of the University News, 28 January, 1991.

IBC SUBSCRIPTION RATES

The recent increase in the price of paper and printing costs has forced as to revise our subscription rates with effect from **June 1991** to Rs. 84/- (excluding bank charges) and Rs. 74/- from scholars etc. **1992 rates will also be Rs. 84/- & Rs. 74/- respectively**—*Eds.*

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Slums of Hope—A Study of Amritsar

Raviuder Singh Sandhu

THE CITY AND ITS SLUMS— A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY

G.N.D. University, Amritsar (1989)

Review by B.K. Nagla

The growing urbanization in a poor and inegalitarian country such as India is exasperating the problem of slums. In this context, the present study is an attempt to understand the causes of deterioration of the living conditions of the slum-dwellers in India. The "slum studies" in India (e.g. D' Souza, 1970; Majumdar, 1983; Madan, 1969; Desai and Pillai, 1972 etc.) have focused their attention mainly on metropolitan cities and have ignored the medium-sized cities. Because of this gap in "slum literature", this study was undertaken to know whether generalizations drawn from slums of metropolitan cities could be true for a medium-sized city. The present work is a revised version of the author's doctoral thesis submitted to GND University, Amritsar in 1985.

LITERATURE ON SLUMS

Dr. Sandhu divides the review of literature on slums into two parts : (a) literature on slums other than in India; (b) literature on slums in India. Three broad approaches emerge from the literature regarding slums in countries other than India. According to the first approach, a slum is regarded as an entity. The second approach has viewed slums as organised communities at all levels. The third approach holds that all slums are not identical. Slum studies in India can be divided into three main categories : (1) studies in relation to Indian Census; (2) studies of general physical and socio-economic surveys; and (3) studies on the social life of slum dwelling.

With such an understanding of the review of literature on slums, the author conducted this study to understand the social life of slum-dwellers in Amritsar city (a medium-sized city of less than 10 lakh population) The aims of the study were to explore whether or not slums are areas of "darkness" and "despair"; whether or not slum-dwellers are socio-culturally marginal to city; and whether or not slum-dwellers of metropolises and medium-sized city are alike.

A WHOLESOME DISTINCT COMMUNITY

The study has established that the slum-dwellers of Amritsar are different from the slum-dwellers of metropolitan cities in terms of literacy (they are more literate), region of origin (they belong to the same cultural region), reasons of migration (are historical rather than economic complusion), etc. The only features common with slum-dwellers in metropolitan cities are that, as in those cities, the majority of the slum-dwellers are drawn from among the scheduled castes, and that persons belonging to the higher castes among the slum-dwellers are socio-economically better off as compared to their counterparts among the scheduled castes. Except for this resemblance, the living conditions of the slum-dwellers in Amritsar are more wholesome (*sic*) as compared to those in the metropolitan cities

Further, it is found that the slum-dwellers under study are structurally marginal, but not culturally, as they hail from pre-partition and post-partition Punjab families. They are conscious of their past and present positions in the society. They are a homogeneous community in terms of caste, religion and occupation. There is no 'darkness' or disorganisation among them.

'SLUMS' OF HOPE

The slum-dwellers of Amritsar are organised on family to community level, and they are also organised on the basis of caste, religion, occupation and political affiliations. They are aware of their social, economic, political and religious positions in the society. They interact at various levels with different (social, economic, political and religious) institutions of the society. Their organisation, awareness and interaction with the larger institutions of the society shows an absence of darkness/disorganisation among them. They believe in a "bright" future for themselves and for their children as well. Contrary to general belief the study concludes that the slum-dwellers of Amritsar live in 'slums of hope' rather than 'slums of despair', as would seem to be the case in most other cities.

The author has argued that most studies on slums in India have been conducted without any theoretical frameworks On tne contrary, he view, "the theoretical generalizations made in such studies (studies of metropolitan slums) may be true for the slum-dwellers of the bigger cities and may not be entirely true for the slum-dwellers of medium-sized cities, such as Amritsar" (*p. 20*). Therefore, it is wrong to say on his part that earlier studies on slums in India did not have any theoretical framework. However, it may be true that generalization of larger cities may not be applicable to the medium-sized cities, because the nature of the slums vary from medium-sized cities to that of metropolises.

Given the grim picture drawn in the studies of slums in India in general, this study makes refreshing observations. The study is analytical in nature. It provides a new perspective on the socio-economic adjustment of the slum-dwellers in India. The study is, on the whole, useful for urban planners and administrators and those engaged in related areas research.

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FACETS OF HUMAN NATURE

Gangadhar Gadgil : THE WOMAN AND OTHER STORIES *Sterling, New Delhi (1990), pp., 183 Rs 130*

Review by M.K. Naik

One of the makers of the modern Marathi short story, Gangadhar Gadgil has now published the first collection of his short stories in English translation. It cannot exactly be called a representative selection, because some of the best stories of Gadgil somehow do not appear here, while the rationale behind the inclusion of some distinctly minor pieces is not quite clear. But on the whole, the collection is substantial enough to provide ample evidence of the quality of Gadgil's art as a short story writer of the first rank, by any standards.

ALL ABOUT A MIDDLE CLASS WORLD

A DAY IN A CHAWL

Gadgil's is mostly a middle class world, though in a story like A Dying World', he captures the feudal ambience of the vanishing landed aristocracy with equal conviction, while 'The Coin', which presents a homeless urchin in Bombay offers a revealing glimpse of low-class urban life. Nevertheless, Gadgil seems to be at his most characteristic in the stories exposing the limitations of middle class values and probing the middle class mind, as in 'The Hollow Men', which is easily the most outstanding short story in this collection. It shows with sharp irony how middle class people live in a chawl in Bombay. Getting and holding till retirement a low white-collar job is the be-all and end-all of a man's life here, while a woman's status is determined by the salary of her husband. Gadgil presents an eventful day in the life of the Chawl, when there is communal riot in the city. The behavior of the denizens of the Chawl, young and old, then reveals how thin is the veneer of God-fearing respectability with which the essentially narrow, self-seeking, cowardly and amoral middle class personality within is overlaid. The very worst in it comes out when there is an opportunity to throw off all its taboos.

AND CULTURE SHOCKS

The impact of middle class urban culture on an old man from the mofussil is the theme of 'The Age of Kali'. Old Uncle Waman from the Konkan comes to Bombay and realizes to his horror how the money-oriented culture of the metropolis has shattered the entire fabric of traditional middle class mores. The shock sends him reeling back to Konkan. The tragedy and comedy of joint family tensions are effectively brought out in 'The Rough and the Smooth'. which presents the entire drama of joint family relationships, with all their little mutual suspicions and jealousies, likes and dislikes, power games and strategies of one-upmanship, employed by the various members.

STORIES OF FEMININE PSYCHE

Gadgil's studies in feminine psychology are particularly noteworthy. 'The Wan Moon' is an evocative presentation of a traditional middle class Hindu wife, treated like a door-mat by her husband. Accustomed to practising the self-denial expected of her all the time, she has lost every trace of individuality. 'Nobody had ever treated her as a mature, grown-up woman ... No wonder she thought and behaved like a child.'

The protagonist in 'The Woman' is an altogether different kind of a person. A strong-willed, aggressive old woman, she dominates her weak husband. 'It wasn't simply because she was a Hindu wife, and to a Hindu wife, a husband is everything, but because of some deeper urge-- the central urge of her womanhood itself, that she had put him at the centre of her life. She had been heroically and desperately protecting him not out of mere affection. Nothing so tepid could have made her do that. What she had been defending was nothing less than the core of her womanhood-- a citadel, a banner that had given meaning to everything'.

Janakibai in 'Farewell' is also old, but as she lies dying, the uppermost thought in her mind is her failure to build a bridge of understanding between herself and her children. In the end, she swallows the bitter pill of the truth; 'One had to draw the line somewhere and accept that a great many things must die along with oneself . . . She suddenly felt detached from everything and felt light as a feather'. Gadgil, however, does not end the story on this comfortable, romantic note. The old woman wakes up once more, late at night, and says to her son, 'Govinda, I feel scared'. 'But she never knew if her son heard her and came to her bedside. Actually, he didn't'.

The middle-aged school mistress in 'A Contented Soul' is a smug and pompous fool, who is blissfully unaware how exasperating people find her ways. At the end of a typical

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day, during the course of which she has managed(quite unwittingly) to tread on as many toes as one possibly can, 'She thinks of the day and feels happy that it has been well spent....Brimful with contentment she yawns and drops into deep untroubled slumber'.

HUSBANDS EXPOSED

Middle class husbands are also subjected to the same degree of ironic exposure in some of these stories, raising larger questions such as the meaning of marriage for a male chauvinist and the place of woman in traditional Hindu society. For the over-sexed Gopal Padhye, in the story entitled after him, his wife is at best either a sex-object or a domestic drudge, depending on his mood. The husband in 'The Wan Moon' takes a sadistic pleasure in humiliating his wife as often as possible. His counterpart in 'The Woman'is, however, more sensitive. He notices with regret, the sea-change that has come over his wife since her menopause. Earlier, 'her whole body had a yielding implor-ing structure. And now. Everything was different. The shoulders had become stiff and angular. Even the nose had become sharp and obstinate. His eyes opened wide. He felt that he understood everything clearly. And then his weary mind gave up the attempt to think further'.

ABOUT CHILDREN

Stories like 'Fledgelings' and 'The Lost Children' reveal how Gadgil is equally perceptive when dealing with the child-mind also. 'Fledgelings' describes a typical day in the lives of two small boys: Vijay and his younger brother, Uday, who represent two different types of personalities. Vijay is a born rebel; Uday, a congenital conformist whose fate is to suffer silently, while his elder brother's incor-rigible ebullience keeps on landing both into several scapes. 'The Lost Children' shows the plight of a ten year old girl, mature beyond her years. She is unjustly blamed when her younger brother gets lost, while she has actually done her best to prevent the catastrophe: 'She stood there outraged and dazed by the injustice of it all. She had been looking forward to a bit of coddling and appreciation, and this was what she had got. She wanted to get lost once again and forever'.

REALISM WITH A TOUCH OF FANTASY

Realism of locale and presentation is one of the assets of these stories, since it makes the probing of psychology all the more convincing. On occasion, Gadgil however, tries his hand at Surrealistic fantasy also. In 'The Truth of the Matter', for instance, many strange feats are performed: a public speaker is unceremoniously siezed and squeezed into an empty groundnut shell; legal procedures are launched against a sparrow which builds a nest in the hat of the narrator who informs us at the end that he has stolen all the atom bombs in Russia and the U.S.A. and that he plans to explode them on the next Diwali day. It is, however, difficult to discover any viable pattern of cogent symbolic significance behind these wierd happenings, except per-haps a few touches of sporadic, unattached irony of a rather conventional variety. It must be conceded though, that Gadgil has elsewhere created meaningful Surrealistic fan-tasy, as in that well-known story, 'The Camel and the Pendulum'.

TIGHTLY STRUCTURED

Gadgil's stories are usually tightly structured. His descriptions of setting are eminently functional, as in 'A Dying World' and 'The Hollow Men'. In a majority of the stories here, the authorial third person narration is employed, and the authorial person gives the impression of an alert, detached and frequently ironic observer at work. At the same time, in some stories, the first person narration is used to serve a specific purpose. Thus, In 'The Rough and the Smooth', joint family relationships and their repercussions are viewed through the eyes of one of the members, and the story thus gains a dual perspective. The shock administered to mofussil sensibility by the ways of acquisitive urban culture in 'The Age of Kali' is felt all the more strongly, because the narrator is old Waman-kaka himself, and the surrealistic fantasy in 'The Truth of the Matter' would perhaps have been all the more unconvinc-ing had the customary third person authorial narration been used here.

THE BEGINNING & THE END

The opening and the ending are always of more than ordinary importance in a form like the short story, with its 'narrow plot of ground', and it is always the mark of a major practitioner that he handles both with a sure awareness of what a certain story demands. Gadgil's stories usually have a brisk beginning, with either a brief comment on the locale or an introductory remark, which sets the action afoot. But wherever the theme seems to demand a longer description of the setting, as in 'A Dying World' and 'The Hollow Men', the author does not shrink from providing it.

There is considerable variety in the way the stories end too. Though the usual strategy is to end with a clinching comment, the point of comment varies suitably.e.g. 'A Dying World' ends with decisive, characteristic action on the part of the protagonist: 'Like some Chandbibi of the heroic age, she went forth to defend the honour of the house'. The last words of the protagonist in 'The Woman' are typical of her character: 'It is my right. It has to be my right'; the ending of 'A Contented Soul', with its fine ironic flourish--- 'Brimful with contentment she yawns and drops into deep untroubled sleep' crowns the ironic mood of the entire story; and the reference to the 'Wan Moon' at the end of the story by that title is symbolic of the impossible wish nursed vainly by the long-suffering wife, who longs for the moon of reciprocated love and respect from her unfeel-ing husband. The only exception is the story, 'This Way and That', where the author is tempted to add a rather tame and wholly unnecessary authorial comment at the end: 'This of course is not the entire story or even the end of the story. Events have continued to proliferate and take turns this way and that. But that continues to happen all the time and none can do anything about it'.

DIRECT FUNCTIONAL STYLE OF A COOL ALOOF OBSERVER

Gadgil's style, both in narration and dialogue, is eminently functional, direct and unadorned. Hence, when-ever he employs an occasional simile or metaphor, the result is startling, as in: 'She went on and on... in her high pitched metallic voice, and he felt as if he was sitting

(Continued on page 7)

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AN EMOTIONAL DIALOGUE WITH TRANSLATION

Om Prakash Sinhal : *ANUVAD SE SAMVAD* **(Poems on Translation)**
Avani Prakashan Ahmedabad : 1990, Rs. 40/-

Comments by Asha S.Kanwar

Attending a party in distant Nicaragua, Salman Rushdie was tapped on the shoulder by an elderly poet who said 'I greatly admire your Indian poet, Tagore'. Rushdie, naturally, was taken aback. What was Tagore doing in Central America ? Apparently an Argentine editor, Victoria Ocampo was determined that Latin America should discover the great genius and had published many excellent translations. (Needless to say, this happened before the Ayatollah's *firman).*

It is well known that translation has been an effective mode of communication across diverse cultures and ages. Within a multi-cultural and multi-lingual society like India, the relevance of translation is paramount, especially now, when even after over forty years of independence, we have neither been able to break free from the hegemony of English, nor claim the prestige due to our own languages.

Poet and translator, Om Prakash Sinhal, sensitive as a lyre in the breeze, has encapsulated his responses to the translation process in a series of poems. Surprising as it may seem, instead of a prosaic treatise on the do's and dont's of translation, Sinhal has covered the whole gamut of the translation process in a series of poems that are both short and sweet. What has then resulted is a unique collection of poems *'Anuvad se Samvad'*. An anthology of ninety-one poems, this volume is a confluence of three strains: *'Sur'*, *'Jaltarang'* and *'Jugalbandi'* which come together in an intricate symphony.

Sinhal's 'felt' response extends to all aspects of translation and the accompanying problems and limitations. The importance of Sinhal's project lies in the fact that, by elevating translation to a creative activity, he is lifting it from its otherwise secondary poor-relation status. As we know, translation is often perceived as a mechanical activity which is denied the dignity of original work. As such, it is palmed off on amateurs and dilletantes without the least concern for expertise or talent, aspects often dismissed as peripheral. Moreover, translation is not a well-paid profession and does not attract the best talent. The fact that translation requires not only a sound knowledge of the source and target languages but also a sensitive response to the text concerned, is often overlooked and hence the cavalier tratment.

The sixteen poems subsumed under *'Sur'* display a sensitive feel for words., and their relevance:

Nahin hote shabdon ke apne ghar
Unki taqdir men likha rehta
Biyaban jungle se guzarna
Anjaan logon ke saath bhatakna (p.14)

Words are itinerant signifiers floating across alien cultures and languages unknown. This 'eternal play of the signifier' assumes interesting dimensions in collocations, word formations, distortions and finally in keeping the language alive and well.

The second section, *'Jaltarang'*, is the poet's candid advice to the potential translator:

Darj karo dimaagh men
Rachna ka mool bhav
Jutne lagenge
Shabd apne aap. (p.46)

So much for our courses on translations, and the theories of Catford, Nida and Newmark. Many of us would agree that creative writing cannot be taught; we can only teach the principles and techniques of creativce writing. Similarly, while one can expose students to translation methods and procedures, competence in translation comes from actual practice. But Sinhal does not expect mere competence. He would settle for nothing short of the creative touch. The relationship between the translator and the text is not cosmetic but something organic – a sort of umbilical attachment that recodes the structural, semantic and cultural components of the source into the receptor language.

That translation is a complex process is clear in *'Jugalbandi'*. In spite of the translator's expertise, sometimes exact meanings elude him/her:

Anuvad ke dauran
Peeche choot gaya
Shabdon ka naihar.

Sinhal's volume of poems on translation is of interest not only to the translator, but also to the student of poetry. *'Anuvad se Samvad'* is all the more commendable as according to the poet, this is the first attempt of its kind in the world. The images in some of the poems are delightful and extremely evocative. I'll leave you to enjoy the sheer visual power of:

Hawaen banti rahi aandhiyan
Marusthal aata raha aur aur paas
Guzar gaya phir caravan.

To capture and recode the elusive meaning from one language to another is the task before every translator worth the salt.

Dr. Asha S. Kanwar is Reader in the School of Humanities, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi- 110068.

We seek help and guidance from our readers and contributors to project and reflect upon the creative genius and variety of talents in different regions and languages. - Editor

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THE COLONISED PEDAGOGUES

(Some comments on the Teaching of Indian Writings in English) **by A. Maverick**

In 1964, the hurdles created by the academic community when Raja Rao's work was being introduced in the literature curriculum of a South Indian university are told by Prof. C.D.Narasimhaiah in following words:

"----The award of a prize for *The Serpent and the Rope* in 1963 by the Sahitya Akademi, one assumed, had helped to make Raja Rao respectable and part of the establishemnt. But no, for before long, those responsible found themselves the target of a vicious campaign to compel the University to withdraw *Kanthapura* from the prescriptions, beause ostensibly, it was obscene, and because it was written in Indian English. Letters were written to the press, resolutions were passed by interested English Teachers' Association in some colleges demanding Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. Frequent prescriptions of it as a textbook in college classes and the abundance of 'aids' and 'guides' in the bazaar had made for a comfortable feeling of familiarity among teachers, which obviated the difficulty that a first response often entails. The Executive Council of the University, thereupon, recommended to the Academic Council that it take steps to withdraw *Kanthapura*....."

Almost three decades later and we seem to have made little headway in the matter. There still exists a coterie of teachers who overtly or covertly demonstrate gestures of hostility and contempt against teaching of Indian Writing in English. R.Raj Rao, a lecturer from Pune University in a hilarious article (see some excepts from *'Mistaken Identity* or *Plain Ignorance,'*) recapitulates the abysmal ignorance of his colleagues in this discipline, when they mistake him for Raja Rao.

NATIVE TALENT & CRITICS -- A DILEMMA

It does little credit to the critical faculties of our campus dons that some overseas expert has to unearth our creative talent. It required a Forstar, a Greene or a Burgess to discover our good novelists. But once an approving nod has been received from the West, those very teachers will turn into cringing lapdogs, bringing out all their finer points in learned dissertations. Several of them have research work to their credit on British and American authors. Yet not one is catalogued or referred to abroad as a critie of authority on Orwell or Faulkner, Pope or Whitman. Worse, if a Walsh calls Chaudhury our best prose writer, not one of these savants, though Indian, exhibit a scholarship to refute that claim. So Walsh still remains an authority on Nirad Babu. We must wait for a Bruce King or an Oliver Parry to tell us who our good poets are, or how good they are.

How dep "colonialism" has entered the psyche of the academic fraternity may be surmised from the fact that a teacher with a degree from Oxford, while commenting on poet Spender's derogatory remarks on Indian English not only swallowed them hook, line and sinker, but also in an article in a journal, took up a weak and pusillanimous stand on the issue, always alluding to the gentleman as 'Sir Stephen Spender', as if his knighthood was sure proof of the authenticity of his views on Indian English.

OUR COMMONWEALTH LINKS

Ever since the inclusion of Commonwealth Literature into postgraduate syllabi of several universities, there has been a constant exchange of visits of teachers between Commonwealth countries. Now, by general consensus, it is acknowledged that the finest writing in English presently being done is in African nations such as Nigeria and Uganda, which have produced, besides the Nobel Leaureate Soyinka, writers of the stature of Chinua Achebe, Gabriel Okara, Christopher Okigbo, James Ngugi and others. But where do you think our worthy teachers rush to? Not to Ibadan or Kampala, but to Sydney, Toronto and Auckland.

A SMALL FRY AT DHARWAR

Back home, the following episode of novelist Malgonkar, as to how he was treated by Dharwar University, will help to add final touches to the portrait of the colonised pedagogue:

'...In the summer of 1971, a Professor Amur, whom I had never met, wrote to me asking if he might visit my house to take a look at my papers for a book on my writings that he had been commissioned to write. When he came, he presented me with a volume on Indian writing in English which was produced by the Karnatak University at Dharwar and to which Amur had contributed a chapter. Since the book, published in 1968-- by which time I had published at least four of my novels and three other books -- makes absolutely no mention of me or my works, in giving it to me, Prof. Amur was either displaying a singular lack of tact or trying to put me in my place by rubbing in the fact that, as far as the Karnatak University was concerned, I was too small a fry to be counted among the Indo-Anglian writers. However, I made light of it. After all, he was my house guest and the visit passed off well.

"A few months later, the author Paul Scott, who happens to be a friend of mine, came to visit me after he had been to Dharwar, where he had delivered a lecture. He told me that the head of the English Deptt. there had complained to him that I had been 'neglecting' the University. I didn't tell him that, if anything, the shoe was on the other foot,. But when more or less the same message was brought by another friend, a Dr. Marlene Fisher, who too had come to stay with me directly after a visit to the University, I began to wonder whether there might not be, after all, something in the charge. But, of course, there was no way of rectifying whatever I was thought of having been guilty of.Supposing I proposed a visit, could not the University turn round and say : 'You'! But we don't even rank you among our writers. Have you not seen our book ?'

"So, when I received an official invitation to give the annual lecture to the English class, I jumped at the chance to make amends. The remuneration, I was told, would be meagre, but I would be put up at the guest house and fed. I agreed to everything.

" I spent two gruelling days performing as required, talking, explaining, parrying, humouring and, all the while, feeling a little vulnerable because, only a month earlier, the campus had been the scene of a prolonged bout of linguistic riots, of which the targets were people with names and backgrounds such as mine. But my listeners could not have been friendlier. My last speech ended shortly before eight

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on the evening of the 22nd, and from this, I was driven straight to a dinner given by the head of the English Department. At this party, I happened to be sitting next to the registrar and laughed dutifully at the sallies of closed-circuit academic humour.

"Dinner ended early, for everyone was tired and my wife and I were back at the guest house well before ten. At the door to our room, we were confronted by the attendant who firmly told us that he had received orders to evict us from our room.

'But who gave you such an order?' I asked in astonishment.

'The Registrar Sahebru.'

"Even as we were getting our things together, the attendant and his assistant were preparing the room for the next occupant who was obviously expected any minute. We got into the car and fled into the night.

"My feelings were something like those of a prince suddenly turned into a frog, and it was good to get into the cold, fresh air outside campus gates."

(From *The Illustrated Weekly of India, Oct 24, 1976)*

MISTAKEN IDENTITY OR PLAIN IGNORANCE ?

"Indian Writing in English (IWE) seems destined to suffer damnation at the hands of a mafia of elitists whose number swells every day. The condemnatory attitude of its members towards poets, playwrights and novelists in India who write in English is too self-evident to merit illustration.

"When, at the begining of the nineteen eighties, I was teaching in a college, and the head of the English Department whispered to me at tea one morning, that together with Mulk Raj Anand and R.K.Narayan, I was considered to be a leading novelist in the country (I was 26 then and had not yet published my first short story), I did not know, as I spat out my tea in embarrassment, that this was a curse that would haunt me all through my career. From time to time, the hopeless case of mistaken identity catches up with me at parties and readings, conferences and seminars, and recently at an academic jamboree in Shivaji University, Kolhapur, a lady teacher came running up to me with a bunch of young students, and said ingratiatingly that she would be honoured if I gave them my autograph. But the one that takes the cake is this telegraphic message from USA, when Raja Rao had won the Neustadt Prize for Literature in 1988: "Hearty congratulations are in order for the twenty-five thousand dollar prize you have won and about which very surprisingly you made no mention."

"Blunders of this kind are bad for the octogenarian novelist, but worse for me. Apart from making me dreadfully suspicious that I look as if I am eighty, they also fill me with the sad realization that whenever I successfully complete (and publish) a poem, a short story or play, it will unjustly be attributed to the author of *Kanthapura* and *The Serpent and the Rope*. The absence of the crucial 'a' at the end of the first name could easily be explained as an instance of printer's devil.

"Such howlers are only possible when there is a general apathy for the discipline in question. The act of mistaking a much younger man for Raja Rao implies that one does not know that Raja Rao was born in the year 1908, or that

THE COLONISED PEDAGOGUES

he lives in the United States and does not normally come to India."

"Poor Raja Rao is not the only victim of such inhospitable incouciance. On several occasions, students of English Literature gape like village idiots when the names of G.V. Desani, Malgudi or Pushpa T are mentioned. Others might have heard of Hatterr, Narayan or Nissim Ezekiel but are unlikely to have read any of them. They are too busy doing courses on the Metaphysicals, Wordsworth or Jean-Paul Sartre, none of whom they understand with any genuine insight.

"If this snobbery were restricted to students, our colleges and universities might have been more genial places to work in. After all, students are (or should be) susceptible to opinions, and are likely to mould theirs as they develop and mature. But the real culprits, one soon discovers, are the teachers themselves. It is perhaps no accident that most people who have mistaken me for Raja Rao have been teachers of English. Several of them have had their education abroad, and it only amplifies the distance that they feef from the reality of India. The standard argument of all of them, whenever a case for IWE is made out, is that it is empty and impoverished and thus incomparable with the literature produced in any other part of the world. Turning to IWE after doing Wallace Stevens or the structuralists is like going to Antop Hill (Bombay) after having lived on Mount Sinai.

"Sensible appeals, such as those of professor Chaman Nahal that we should set up our own standards, evolve our own criteria for judging ourselves, fall on ears plugged with cotton and loaded with wax. The teachers continue to be as prescriptive as they can, and are oblivious of the moral harm they are doing to generations of students.

"At present, the activities of established critics in the country who are usually teachers in universities or editors of journals, are too diffuse to be of significance. Much of their writing tends to be commissioned and made to order, so that they can write on Shakspeare or Words worth, Ramanujan or Ezekiel in exactly the same frame of mind. Meanwhile, let us prepare for war against the high and mighty mafia!" *R.Raj Rao (Debonair) April-1989*

A.Maverick is the pseudonym of a literary critic and poet.

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EDUCATION AND SOCIO- CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

(Paper presented at Round Table Discussion on Development and Education on March 18, 1991 at Raj Bhawan, Jaipur.)

A.M. Ghose

"Ignorance produces rashness, relfection timidity "- *Thucydides*

"It is a superstition to believe that there must be a majority view on everything". *Hayek.*

Poverty, world poverty, as a formidable problem began to draw the attention of economists, social scientists, political thinkers and educationists only in the second half of the 20th century, and soon it became a branch of study. Very soon, these scholars realised that a 'compartmentalized approach' to the problem was intractable. The need was felt for an 'integrated' approach.

Wealth and poverty, to begin with, were measured in terms of *per capita consumption* of calories, energy, water, health and hygiene. Housing and transport were also taken into account. At the same time, another problem began to draw the attention of the social scientists and thinkers, *i.e.* the limited nature of our resources. Demographic researches and ecological studies, now fairly sophisticated, began to make headway.

Some economists felt that *the world could be changed* and some of them passionately believed that *the means were there!* What was needed was a new political world-view, planned efforts and concerted will. There were others who thought that growth, *i.e.* wholesome development, through planned economy, was a pipe dream. They argued that 'plans' would, sooner or later, lead to the emergence of totalitarianism, and may bring into existence unintended problems. Their views were confirmed by what, in fact, happened in some parts of the world where 'plans' were implemented seriously.

Thinkers, therefore, began to talk of 'quality of life' and some even talked of 'curse of affluence' and non-pecuniary benefits. Researches revealed that poverty meant different things to different people. Some, therefore, began to talk of the importance of *freedom as against security.* Education, for them, meant providing opportunity for a better 'quality of life' for the individual and, subsequently, for the society. Providing 'skilled manpower' could not be the sole aim of education. Education, no doubt, was seen as an 'investment', but the benefits were not to be calculated wholly in terms of lucre. And yet a new discipline, the economics of education, made its apearance. Around 1964, a new slogan was heard almost all over the world: war on poverty. It was not only a slogan with economic overtones, it had political and social overtones which many economists, experts in their discipline, simply overlooked

This bring us to the centre of the problem. There were, broadly speaking, two contrasting views. One was that schools, colleges, institutions of technology have an important role to play in the life of the nation in which they happen to exist; they were supposed to promote the process of growth and development. Those who took a narrow view of things meant by growth, economic prosperity, and those who took a broader view of things referred to growth and development in the different spheres of life. What, in short, was pleaded for included massive restructing of curricula, more funds, vocationalization of some sort and a policy geared to man-power forecasting needs.

The other view holds that educational institutions can themselves achieve precious little. A massive restructuring of curricula and more funds which do not take into account the needs as they are perceived by the people, might give rise to uneven or unbalanced growth, leading to brain drain, rise in unemployment of the educated youth, and, finally, perhaps, to widespread discontent. Some even went to the extent of saying that growth or expansion in education may lead to a declaration of development in the real sense!

We do find economists and policy-reserachers in different countries defending the contrasting points of view armed with huge amounts of facts and figures.

Before we can meaningfully discuss the role of the education and socio-cultural transformation, I think we need to examine the nature and character of what are called the socio-cultural issues. The socio-cultural problems are naturally perceived in diverse ways by different people. The diversity in the perception is determined by several factors: the geographical environment in which they happen to live and their historical awareness; their religious beliefs; their ability to earn, save and spend; their educational achievements and futuristic aspirations, if any. The point is that this deiversity, by itself, is an intractable problem. Any policy could be framed relatively more easily and brought into use for implementation if these perceptions were less diverse and discordant in character. In a society as hierarchical and stratified as ours, the initial problem is to reduce the bewildering diversity and make the diverse elements less discordant only to make them a little more amenable and responsive. But this is not possible beyond a limit, nor perhaps, desirable. I am inclined to believe that the formulation and implementation of any educational policy necessarily presupposes a sort of 'homogenization' in so far as those perceptions are concerned; unless the diversities in approaches and aspirations are lessened or softened, no policy could either be proclaimed or implemented. An educational policy which ignores this fierce diveristy of approaches and aspirations, runs the risk of being rendered useless. Or, the benefits accruing from the successful implementation are very likely to be appropriated by the relatively small, but privileged sections.

All significant and enduring social and cultural changes are preceded by two movements coming from different directions and their coalescence. There must be an *aspiration from below* in that a sizeable section have a vague sense of discontent regarding the existing state of affairs, and a *preparedness* among the more informed and perceptive sections of the society to provide, at least, in broad outlines, a *sense of direction and purpose* to the discontended sections, with a view not only to mollifying their dicontent, but also to provide a safe anchorage. In course of time, thse two commingled movements may take the shape of a 'World-view', as it were, and enrich the diverse walks of life and

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broaden the horizons of renewed enquiry. Some of the religious movements in medieval India, to my mind, are fine examples of such changes.

In this connection, I am tempted to refer to a question which Aristotle raised. The question is : Is there any 'Master Activity'in human affairs? Aristotle answered the question: It is 'Politics'. I, for myself, am not so sure of the Aristotelian answer, knowing fully well that the philosopher used 'politics' is a very broad sense. Perhaps there is no one 'Master Activity' even though this sounds paradoxical. Of one thing, however, I am pretty sure. An eagerness on the part of the more informed and perceptive section to offer pabulum does not serve any real purpose. The people do not have the faintest idea of their 'needs' and their 'invisible roots'. Perhaps we need to have two prods, one to stimulate the people, to raise the hopes of a better life which education alone confers, and another in the shape of the educational courses which they would find useful. What we have often done is to offer educational courses which they do not need

The educationists, therefore, have a twofold task : One to identify those sections in the society which are likely to respond to educational programmes tailored to meet their variegated educational needs, and secondly, to chalk out courses of study, equally variegated, to be offered to those sections already identified. This, in short, means that the right kind of educators meet the members of the society in a dialogic situation with proper feed-backs.

In an important sense, the educator should remain away from the political activists interested in immediate results and palliation. The educator is interested in more enduring changes at the heart of which there is relentless enquiry or examination. This is what Socrates wanted, and that is why he was so critical of the 'Sophists' ready with answers to all kinds of questions without caring to examine the roots of those questions.

Dr. A.M. Ghose is former Head, Deptt. of Philosophy, University of Rajasthan.

Ph. D From The States

You must be a yokel
Not to smoke, drink
or eat beef, they say,
What research
Will you do on Hemingway ?

He gulps the jibes down
Swimming in an amniotic pool,
Womb of all things Indian;
The telephone's umbilical cord
Joins his to Mother India

Fellow or scholar
Aboard a ship
Who refuses to be drowned;
His values are sound
He wisely spends each minute and dollar.

Back home, the tail
Wags amidst the academe,
Curls about a Reader's chair,
Colleagues sniff its Yankee air
Bone-dry from islands in the stream.

Poet Ashok Mahajan needsno introduction to the readers of the Chronicle.

FACETS OF HUMAN NATURE.....

(Continued from page 2)

under a tin shed and somebody was pelting stones on it'. And when he permits himself to indulge in a touch of the romantic, it is rather justified by the context of situation and character, as in 'For a moment or two Janakibai was caught in a moonbeam of happiness'. His generally ironic tone suits his stance as a cool, aloof observer.

Of the sixteen stories in the collection, three have been translated by Ian Raeside and the rest by the author himself. The translation reads well on the whole, but there are a few places where a certain awkwardness creeps in, e.g. 'She tore her brother into smithereens' (The operation is normally performed by smashing); 'And bother is after all bothersome' *(p.153);* 'This is the way different chaps die, each differently' *(p.152).* There is a curious error in transliteration on *(p. 29)* : Raeside transliterates the English word, 'Carrom' as 'Karam' in Marathi, while the actual pronunciation of this work in that language is more likely to be nearer to 'Kyaram'.

There is also that usual crop of misprints--that Cain's Mark of almost all Indian publications: e.g. 'more' for 'move' *(p.9)*, 'Ater' for 'After')P.10), 'Mathrai' for 'Mathutai' *(p.83)* etc.

A PLEA FOR MORE TRANSLATIONS

This little cavilling apart, *The Woman and Other Stories* is indubitably a book that makes rewarding reading. It is a welcome addition to the literature of translations from the Indian languages into English.

In fact, we need many, many more translations like this, of significant works in the several Indian languages, so that the discerning reader, both in India and abroad, can get to know the best that is being thought and said in the literatures of India today. India today can indeed do with an independent Translation Akademi, which could plan and execute this kind of a project on an extensive scale.

Meanwhile, an institution like the Sahitya Akademi could launch a massive translation campaign along these lines. This could actually be a constructive way of proving that National Integration is something more than an empty, applause-catching slogan to be raised from public platforms by politicians who keep an open mouth on all questions, or a concept reserved for indifferent projection through brainless television serials with their machine-made plots.

Prof. M. K. Naik is a well-known litterateur and cricic, now settled in Bombay after a long and fruitful academic career.

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UNDERSTANDING THE PUNJAB PROBLEM

Ram Narayan Kumar & George Sieberer
THE SIKH STURGGLE : *Origin, Evolution and Present*
Chanakya Publication, New Delhi (1991) p.p. 396, Rs. 380/-

Reviewed by Amrik Singh

Here is a book which seeks to answer some of the nagging questions about the problems of Punjab and the Sikhs. It is an important and,in some respects, an original book, though it is also flawed to some extent. More of that later.

The author Ram Narayan Kumar is a social activist who got involved in the rehabilitation of the 1984 Sikh vicitms in Delhi. As he started understanding the issues which had led to the organised killing and its aftermath, he began to feel that there was much more to it than met the eye. In March 1988, having freed himself from some of his other commitments, he decided to document the violation of human rights in Punjab. "The picture of atrocities that emerged before my eyes was so disttressing", he says, that he "found himself overwhelmed to the exclusion of interest in other aspects of the Sikh problem". However, he soon realised that " a report of official atrocities alone would leave little scope for a rational understanding of the roots of the turmoil in Punjab". The outcome is this book.

A ROVING ACCOUNT OF THE PAST

The book's range of concerns is impressive. In the first chapter, for example, he gives the Historical Prelude. This is a roving account of Punjab right from the earliest days. He deals with Alexander's invasion of India, the rise of the Mauryas, the social basis of Buddhism, the role of the Huns and the Shakas, the origin of the Jats, the coming of the Scythians and various other tribes, the advent of Islam, Hindu medieval ethos and so many other related issues. This chapter is interesting because hardly any one has gone in these issues in an interrelated way. My only criticism of this chapter is that it does not go deep enough into the issue of how Islam spread in Punjab, and what factors were responsible for it. He says something about the spread of Sikhism among certain sections of the population, Jats and Khatris for instance, but it is not specific enough.

In the next chapter dealing with the Origins and Ordeals of the Sikh faith, he goes into issues like the common teachings of the Sufis and Guru Nanak, Yogic Buddhism, Buddhism and Islam, the impact of the Bhakti Movement upon Punjab and such other issues. After that he gives a brief account of the various Sikh Gurus, martyrdom of the 5th Guru and the 9th Guru, and what turn this gave to the Sikh movement. There is also some discussion of the career and role of Banda,the rise of the *Misals* and the emergence of Ranjit Singh. Both these chapters were originally contributed by an Austrian scholar, Georg Sieberer. What Kumar has done is to re-write them so as to make them consistent with the style of the book. Furthermore, he has given him the credit of being a co-author.

20TH CENTURY SIKH ASPIRATIONS

Without going into further details of the inervening chapters, it would be pertinent to refer to Kumar's comments about the aspirations of the Sikhs in the begining of the 20th century, when the system of communal electorates was introduced as a part of the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms, He points out that the only community to oppose it categorically was the Sikhs. Similarly, he recalls that in 1924, a committee of the Central Legislature, including Tej Bahadur Sapru and M.A. Jinnah, suggested radical changes in the statutory set-up,and prepared the outlines of an laternative set-up known as the Commonwealth of India Bill, 1925. This Bill visualised a politically de-centralised India and opposed the kind of over-centralisation that came to be the hallmark of the Indian Constitution now in force.

In fact, what Kumar does is to offer an overview of Indian political events more or less from the beginning of the 20th century. In course of it, he recalls Gandhi's oft-quoted assurance to the Sikhs in 1929. His survey, such as it is, digs out certain obscure or less referred-to assurances and observations of Congress leaders. This has effectiveness of its own. For instance, after the Pakistan Resolution had been passed in 1940, addressing the Punjab Assembly on March 11, 1941, Sikandar Hayat said,

> "One word to my Sikh friends before I conclude... If they press for a powerful and superimposed Centre at the expense of the provinces, they will be doing gross injustice to the Punjab and incalculable harm to their own community."

ON THE EVE OF PARTITION

Many more things were to happen between 1941 and 1947. Kumar discusses the Cripps Mission, the Quit India Movement, the Wavell Plan, the Cabinet Mission Plan, the reactions of the Akalis to the proposals made, the details of the Partition and many more things. In regard to each one of these developments, what he projects is the confused and ambivalent attitude of Akali leadership, the attempts made by them to salvage their position to whatever extent it was possible. He quotes from the foreword that Master Tara Singh wrote to a completely forgotten book authored by Landon Sarafield entitled *Betrayal of the Sikhs*,

> "So the course left for Sikhs is to prove their very acute and genuine anxiety and further that there can be no internal peace, not at least in Punjab, unless some effective power is given to the Sikhs to defend their culture, economic and other interests."

What has happened since then is a confirmation of what Tara Singh said at that time.

AFTER 1947: PUNJABI SUBA

Kumar's treatment of developments after 1947 is much more detailed than of the earlier period. He refers to how PEPSU was established and how there was competition for power between the Congress and the Akalis. Nothing was decided in favour of a Punjabi-speaking State even in 1956, when the States Reorganisation Commission reported. All

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that happened was that PEPSU was merged with Punjab. Even this decision, according to him, was seen " as a step to deny the Sikh majority in PEPSU the opportunity to elect a government of their own".

As a reaction to what had happened, the Regional Formula was devised. But this too was opposed by those elements which did not want the Akalis to capture power. He goes into further details of the various agitations, the rise of Sant Fateh Singh, his last fast and how it was called off when the war with Pakistan broke out in 1965. Immediately after that, a Parliamentary Committee under Speaker Hukum Singh was appointed, and the Punjabi Suba was created. What Kumar does is to go into details of how the boundaries were manipulated and in what respects the Punjab Reorganisation Act, 1956,violated the Indian Constitution. This, in fact, leads to one of his better written chapters on the River Waters.

WATERS OF THE GREAT DIVIDE

In this chapter, Kumar reproduces the text of the Inter-Dominion Agreement signed between India and Pakistan on May 4, 1948. The two points which he underlines are that agreement projects a dispute between East and West Punjab and no one else; and secondly, there was no reference whatsoever to any other non-riparian State. In 1955, in order to justify the allocation of water of three rivers to East Punjab before the World Bank, "India conjured up a scheme allocating 8.0 MFA to Rajasthan, 7.2 MFA to Punjab and 0.5 MFA to Kashmir." He comments about this allocation in these words: " The allocation to Rajasthan, a non-riparian state, was more than the combined total allocation of water to Punjab."

The chapter is subtitled as the Elemental Issue and goes into further details of what is wrong with the concept of the Rajasthan Canal, how foreign authorities have described the whole scheme as "a dubious one", how no land survey had been undertaken and so on. According to these various authorities, the desert land is porous and "deficient in organic matter". No wonder it has led to water-logging and salinity. Above all, he quotes authorities to show that while Rajasthan had been allocated 8.54 MFA, its actual use even after a quarter century was only 4.9 MFA.

There is also a detailed description of how Indira Gandhi gave an award during the Emergency which was contested by the Punjab Government and the matter was taken to the Supreme Court. When Darbara Singh was the Chief Minister, he was pressurised into withdrawing that case, and that is where the matter stands now. This is a highly detailed and factual chapter, which it would not be possible for anyone concerned with this issue to ignore in the years to come.

ANANDPUR SAHEB RESOLUTION
CENTRE-STATES RELATIONS

The next chapter dealing with the Anandpur Saheb Resolution is equally weighty and analytical, perhaps the best in the book. He goes into the whole issue of how the Centre vested itself with many far-reaching powers when the Constitution was being drawn up. In fact, he quotes several relatively unknown documents connected with the drawing-up of the Constitution and the proposals made by some of the Sikh members, and how those were evaded or rejected. Of course, it all culminated in two Sikh members refusing to sign the Constitution on the final day.

In this connection, he recalls the well-known remark of Nehru in 1946, as also the earlier statement of Gandhi in 1929. What he underlines very emphatically is the fact that, all these years, the Sikhs have never accepted the set-up that was established after 1947.

Considerable attention is given to the distribution of financial powers between the Centre and the States. This had made the States dependent upon the Centre. Coupled with it are the various other powers either vested in the Centre statutorily or appropriated by it over the years. In consequence, the States are left with very little initiative or authority or resources. Some of the figures quoted by him are telling. For instance, he says, "Of the combined aggregate resources during the period 1951-85, the Union Government raised 71.5 per cent and the States only 28.5 per cent of the tax resources". As in the case of the chapter on the River Water, this chapter too is strong in details and its punch.

One of the interesting features of this chapter is a fictional dialogue between him and several Akali politicians with whom he discusses the Anandpur Saheb Resolution. Various aspects of the problem are gone into. Since the whole thing is in the form of questions and answers, almost any objection that could be anticipated is put forward and dealt with. In a sense, this is one of the more valuable portions of the book.

Since Anandpur Saheb Resolution is generally regarded as separatist, there is a whole chapter dealing with how the Centre has dealt with this problem. This has taken the form of sustained and savage repression, and leads to an 80 page long chapter under the heading:State Terrorism in Punjab-An Investigative Report. In the style of a true social activist, he gives factual details of what has been happening, and how innocent people have been killed and so on. Some of the stories are chilling and one of the persons referred to at more than one place is Gobind Ram, the Superintendent of Police, who indulged in untold cruelties including mass repression and was ultimately blown up in an explosion master-minded by the militants.

WHAT THE MILITANTS ARE DOING

At this stage, anyone can raise the question, and it would be a legitimate one, whether what the militants are doing can be defended. Kumar does not go into this issue. He leaves it to the reader to draw his inference. What he does is to analyse the whole sequence of developments which has made the Sikh psyche what it is and which has led to this unremitting confrontation between the Sikhs and the Centre. What he says in the Preface is of relevance here:

> "The demand for an independent Sikh state as the ultima ratio of their frustrated desire for greater autonomy within a genuinely federalistic Indian State will impress us as less unfeasible if we remember that the present array of States in the Indian subcontinent is an artefact whose ephemeral validity

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UNDERSTANDING THE PUNJAB PROBLEMS

is suggested by great fluidity of lines on the political map of he subcontinent in the past. If there is a recurring pattern in pan-Indian history, it is the cyclic emergence of ultimately self-serving imperial structures again broken by the political self-assertion of vigorous minority nations. I hope that this attempt would promote better understanding of the Sikh aspirations and their struggle among peoples of India and abroad."

This is well put, but it is more suggestive than detailed.

Most people have fixed notions in regard to a large number of things,and the Punjab situation is one of them. A very large number see the Sikhs as terrorists – this image is encountered in most foreign countries. But nobody stops to answer the question which the former P.M. Chander Shekhar raised, "How come that those who were willing to die for the country, think and act differently today?" Is it irrational ? Is it over- reaction to things? Is it desperation, fundamentalism or plain bigotry? There can be any number of explanations including those listed here.

What Kumar shows convincingly is that the whole thing is rooted in history and the imperatives of ethnicity, as also the manner in which politics evolved till 1947. What happened after 1947 is, however, so recent that most people have already a point of view and an opinion about it. But if they are willing to look at things from a fresh point of view, Kumar presents the case with cogency and with a wealth of detail.

There are two things, however, which are implicit but should have been made explicit.

One is the dubious role of the Congress party, and particularly that of Indira Gandhi, in having created a situation where tangling between the Hindus and the Sikha became unavoidable. That it was even manipulated, Kumar saw for himself in Delhi in 1984.The second is the manner in which the tangle has been further complicated, almost deliberately so. How Rajasthan was brought in has been mentioned above. How, by relying upon the faulty 1961 Census, a whole range of problems concerned with territory and population were created is only glanced at, but not enlarged upon.

Today the problem has become bafflingly convoluted, and so much would have to be disentangled before the issues can be sorted out.

Kumar should have gone into these related issues much more directly, and even with a touch of polemics. The material is all there; all that was needed was to view that angle from the point of view of one who was not committed in a partisan way. Kumar's handling of complex data is maserly and, as to his sympathies, he carries the reader with him.

NO CONCLUSION

The book ends with an Epilogue, in which the events of the 1989 General Election are described. What the book lacks is a conclusion. In a sense the conclusion has been given in the words quoted from the Preface. But surely this is not enough.

What was needed was a statement to wrap up the argument. Kumar builds up a formidable case in favour of understanding the Sikh mind, but he needs to also link it with the current distortions of political life. At the end of the book, therefore, one is left with the feeling of something having been left unstated. Nothing very detailed was called for. But a couple of pages summing up the argument would have helped immeasurably.

The book deserves to be brought out in a paper-back edition so as to be more easily available.

Dr Amrik Singh, a well-known educationist, former Vice Chancellar and former editor of the Indian Book Chronicle is an activist-commentator or several aspects of the Indian scene.

Books Received

1. **K, V. Venkataraman** : DIVINE PATHWAYS (Poems) (1991)
2. **T. S. Jacob** : FOLK AND FOLLY (Stories) (1989)
3. **Dr. Ellis Ovesen** : BELOVED (Poems) (1990)
4. **V. S. Skanda Prasad** : GLIMPSES (Poems) (1990)
5. ,, ,, SWEET SIXTEEN (Poems) (1987)
6. Compiled and Edited by **V. S. Skanda Prasad**: EAST-WEST VOICES (1988) (An International Anthology of Poetry in English) Guest Editor : Rosemary Wilkinson
7. Compiled and Edited by **V. S. Skanda Prasad**: *Guest Editor* : Dr. A. Chittaranjan Saha RISING STARS (1991) (An International Anthology of Contemporary Poetry in English)

Chetna Books
2–3–650, Kavoor Road, Kapikad,
Bejai, Mangalore–575004

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AFTER THE PARTY

Kishore Bhimani : THE COCKTAIL INSURGENCY , *Writers Workshop, Calcutta* (1990)

Reviewed by Aprana Sharma

The story begins with a normal day in the life of an employee of a successful business. We come to know that a cocktail party is on the cards, for which last minute invitations are to be dealt with. The evening comes; the party takes off, and is soon in full swing, till the idea of causing an insurgency creates a minor stir; ...but after the initial enthusiasm, the scheme is left to be thought over. However, we , the readers, are aware that this is far from being the end of the matter.

In the subsequent chapters, each character's past is delineated and the various facets of his here personality are discussed threadbare.

With this, a series of flash-backs come to our aid. By this time, the reader has begun to take a personal interest in the goings-on, and finds him/herself taking sides. Now, the time is ripe for the exponent to re-introduce the idea of revolt and take up from where we had left at the start of the story.

"In the specious and tastefully decorated drawing-room of Dr. Ashoke Purohit's Palm Avenue residence. Amarjeet, persuasive teasing; occasionally taunting managed to overcome objections, one by one. "...And thus, the idea of an uprising or insurgency that had caught everyone's imagination and held them captive, at Amarjeet's cocktail party, began to ebb its way towards accomplishment...

The party, a replica of one of those in the "*Evening Elite*", by Shobha De, had all the ingredients to make it a success. namely, a Naxalite-turned-journalist Ramesh, a gullible government servant Debjyoti Mandal, Amar's boss, a wealthy yet greedy businessman, Rafiq Ansari and Amar's happy-go-lucky colleague-cum-friend Tomy Fegredo – they are all there. It would appear that the two ladies. Devika and Vatsala, had set rules to play. The other invitees were mere 'props' to create the right environment.

Each member of the cast represents a particular rung of the social ladder. Their lives when dealt with seperately tell us the tale of the boy next door, aiming for " the big splash." The only difference lies in the fact that our friends here, like normal human beings elsewhere, even after having achieved a certain stature, are 'restless'. Their various pursuits just" lulls him, puts him to sleep", but offers them no satisfaction.

Under such circumstances, a revolt seems inevitable. Pradictably, the concoction of these varying elements is ideal for the brewing-up of a revolution in a cocktail glass. The only aim is to "start a revolt amongst the thinking people, who in turn would influence the masses. This would trigger off a chain reaction and hopefully at the end of it, the common man would get all agitated and refuse to exist under a weak, corrupt, featureless and self – perpetuating system."

We (readers) take a break, as we are given a glimpse, into the pasts of the many characters, wherein lies the seed of discontent that seeks vengeance against the social structure in the form of a revolt.

Events seem to gain a momentum as ideologies are given vent to, and willing comrades unite. A call of "February 1 : Your day of destiny", catches the imagination of the oppressed masses. Different areas are dealt with, competently; within limited resources, funds were arranged, in which direction Vatsala's (Domph) has done wonders. Arms and volunteers pour in. And finally, the D-day comes, and the inevitable happens.

The entire sequence of events is gripping and beautifully portrayed, so as to hold the readers captive to the end, when we sit back with a sigh to chew upon what the author has offered.

The retarding element, however, is the language, which at time becomes too loud. Tomy's dialogue and other lewd expressions, used quite freely throughout, are too coarse and in a poor taste. Again, the constant reminders to the low moralities of the people repel the readers and the encounter with the remarkable high libido of the characters begins to tell on the nerves of the reader. These touches may make or complement a best-seller more than they do justice to a classic type of thematic narration.

Kishore Bhimani's style is in keeping with the modern trend. His pen has a flow that gives no indication of this book being a maiden attempt. There is perfect synchronization between his thoughts and his work.

The setting is as familiar as the weekly vegetable market. The story evolves against a typically Indian backdrop, albiet of the cocktail set of elite in an urban setting; and so has a ring of authenticity. The idea dealt with is a thought – provoking one, as it puts the jarring facts of this concrete jungle of human social beings in black and white. The pages marking the end are picked up from a file of facts rather than a fairy tale. We are reminded that nothing short of a John Galt from the pages of *'Altas Shringgee'*, can sound the death-knell of this system that has evolved through the ages and thrived on the law of the jungle.

Ms. Aparna Sharma is a young scholar of English Literature.

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EARLY HUMAN FOOTPRINTS ACROSS CONTINENTS

V.Rami Reddy : PALAEOLITHIC AND MESOLITHIC CULTURES
Mittal Publications, New Delhi, 1989, Rs.140/- pp. 154

Reviewed by Rima Hooja

In the present age of intense specialisation, it is difficult to find publications which can summarise and syntehsise data pertaining to the prehistory of one sub-continent and two continents into a single volume of 154 pages! That, however, has been Professor Rami Reddy's endeavour in the book *(Palaeolithic and Mesolithic Cultures)* under review.

THE FRAMEWORK

Covering the 'Stone Age' periods, known to archaeologists and prehistorians as the 'Palaeolithic' and the 'Mesolithic', the book contains eight fairly comprehensive chapters and fifteen pages of illustrations of tool-types, dealing with the prehistory of Europe, Africa and India.

The writer has clarified in the preface to the book that the "...Primary objective of the work (is) to reach the layman and the specialist in the field", and that the work is intended to "... meet the basic needs of the college/university students, researchers and teachers of the concerned and related disciplines". To that extent, the book can be termed successful, though one wishes that more recent data had also been incorporated in the text.

The first chapter, entitled 'Frameworks for Prehistoric Archaeology' provides a handy summary of early work in the field of prehistoric archaeology. A sub-section on conceptual models deals with the divisions or periodizations of prehistory prevalent in the 19th and early 20th centuries, including Thomsen's 'Three Age' distinction between a Stone Age, a Bronze Age and an Iron Age promulgated in 1815, and Lubbock's 1863 division of the Stone Age into an Old Stone Age- i.e. Palaeolithic, and a New Stone Age- i.e. Neolithic. Other major sub-divisions made by different prehistorians (invariably European prehistorians at the point in time) are also outlined. Many of these have been rejected or redefined now, but retain their relevance for the study of prehistory, since they form part of archaeological convention and literature.

PREHISTORY OF EUROPE

The second and third chapters of the book deal with the palaeolithic cultures of Europe, and the art of that period, respectively. Through a skillful selection of data from early excavation reports and other publications, the author has succeded in presenting a comprehensive overview of the different Old Stone Age cultures of Europe.

Among the topics dealt with in chapter 2 are different stone-using traditions of the Lower, Middle and Upper Palaeolithic like the 'Pebble Tools', Abbevillian, Acheulian, Clactonian Levalloisian, Tayacian, Mousterian, Aurignacian, Perigordian, Gravettian, Solutrean and Magdalenian cultures. Unfortunately, the bulk of the information is rather dated, and though the pioneering works of Breuil, de Mortillet, Bordes etc. retain their validity even today, the inclusion of more recent data would certainly enhance the quality of this chapter.

The chapter on palaeolithic art is adequate, covering sites like the painted caves at Altamira, Lascaux etc. along with brief descriptions of techniques used and so forth. Prof. Reddy has discussed prehistoric art forms under the categories of engravings, drawings and paintings, sculptures (bas-reliefs and sculptures in the round) and modelled figures.

The work then goes on to discuss the mesolithic cultures of Europe. Beginning with a short explanation of the term 'Mesolithic' and its major distinctive features, chapter four describes the Azilian, Tardenoisian, Asturian and Larnian 'cultures' of Western Europe, as well as the Maglemosian, Kitchen-midden, Champignian and Sauveterrian ones of Northern Europe in considerable detail. In addition to this, the 'Tanged-point', Lyngby and Ertebolle traditions are also briefly mentioned.

THE INDIAN SUB-CONTINENT

The fifth chapter concentrates on the palaeolithic cultures of the Indian Sub-Continent. The chapter opens with a short exposition on the history, development, concepts and problems related to researches on the early human cultures in India, taking the reader from the discoveries of the Kudathini and Kupgal ashmounds in 1836 by Captain Newbold, through the work of Meadows Taylor, Foote, Evans, Cunningham and others to Sahani, Majumdar and Wheeler *(pp. 48-50)*. Rami Reddy has also provided a useful sub-section on the terminology issue, entitled 'Nomenclatural Problems' which should be helpful for students of Indian prehistory, since the debate on correct terminology for the Indian Palaeolithic has been a fairly protracted one!

The author then goes on to describe various Lower, Middle and Upper Palaeolithic sites and 'cultures' in considerable detail. If this chapter can be brought up-to-date, incorporating data obtained during the late 1970's and 1980's, it will give students in India a thoroughly comprehensive account of the Indian Palaeolithic.

The Mesolithic cultures of India are described with thoroughness in the chapter that follows. Once again, the chapter begins with a brief discussion on the terminology. An account of the contributions of scholars in the field of Indian mesolithic studies -- ranging from Carlleyle and Foote etc. to Sankalia and others (esp. of the Deccan College Poona tradition) -- follows. Prominent sites have been listed, and separate sub-sections have been devoted to examining aspects of the Mesolithic, such as the chronology or temporal span of this period, the climate and ecology, disposal of the dead and 'racial' composition.

CONTINENT OF AFRICA

The penultimate and final chapters pertain to Africa. The seventh chapter called 'Palaeolithic Cultures of Africa', summarizes data pertaining to the Lower, Middle and Upper palaeolithic of East Africa, South Africa and North Africa. Cultures connected with the Kafuan, Oldowan, Chelleo-Acheulian, Sangoan, Stillbay, Magosian,

(Continued on page 14)

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WOMEN'S ROLE IN INFORMAL SECTOR IN KERALA

P.M. Mathew and M.S. Nair : WOMEN'S ORGANISATIONS AND WOMEN'S INTERESTS *Ashish Publishing House, New Delhi, 1988 p. 177, Rs. 130/-*

Reviewed by M.K. Sukumaran Nair

The National Perspective Plan for Women (NPPW) announced last year by the Gvernment of India, has been much criticised by various women's organisations on various counts. The thrust point of their attack has been the employment of women, the corner–stone of the Plan. They allege that the focus of official policy relating to employment of women so far has been either to throw them out of employment, or to margainalise them into the unorganised sectors. In this context, it is pertinent to ask: What are the analytical basis of the various perceptions on women's employment ? Unfortunately, we do not have much studies which use a wider canvas for analysing the roles of women's organisations, the State and various social groups in the labour market.

WOMEN STUDIES

Research on women in India and their role in society, which has been on for some decades, has undergone certain qualitative changes over time. These relate mainly to the questions that have been asked, the significance of which is a subject of debate. Initiated by sociologists and anthropologists, to start with, women studies were mainly in terms of their role in the family, kinship net-work etc. As a hand-maid of the imported 'role conflict theory' the sixties saw profusion of studies on educated and urban working women, bypassing the vast sections of the toiling masses of the crucial sectors of the economy. The focus of the problems of population growth, unemployment and the active interest in the so-called 'informal sector' in the early 1970's and the impact of the western feminist movements contributed to the crystallising of women studies as a distinct area of investigation. Of late, a handful of studies have focused on, in varying degrees, the invisible character of much of women's work, their survival strategies, the impact of development planning on them, their role in social and the wider structures and processes of society.

Despite these qualitative changes that came about over time, Indian studies on women, by and large, suffer from a crucial lacuna: lack of an integrated approach, which takes into account both the micro and the micro aspects, i.e. from the household to the wider structures and processes of society, and from regional specificities to global developments.

It is in this context that the relevance of the book under review arises. It is a pioneering study of the kind in India. Its noveltyarises on two counts: (a) It is an interdisciplinary study; and (b) the effort that has gone into putting in a political economy perspective, both the 'political' and the so-called 'apolitical' organisations of women, is commendable.

In fact, this study cannot be put into the usual basket called 'women's studies'; it is something more than that. It is interesting to note that gender has added a new dimension to Dr. Mathew's early studies in the area of the theory and policy of the informal sector. And for this reason, the study should be a valuable guide to further research in this area.

WOMEN ORGANISATIONS:SCOPE OF STUDY

This study draws upon the working of various women's organisations, both political and the ostensibly 'apolitical', in relation to the developments in Kerala's economy and society over time, obviously against the Indian and global reality. It covers organisations related with political parties, voluntary organisations of women called ' Mahila Samajams' and organisations sponsored by various caste religious groups. The main aspects examined by the study are: organisational strength of the women's organisations in terms of their number,membership,coverage,and financial position, their political and economic linkages, and the inherent ideologies, the qualitative level of the organisations in terms of social consciousness and participation of members and beneficiaries, their role in trade union and political struggles, and reasons of success or failure in achieving the objectives.

The study on political organisations is based entirely on secondary sources of data and intensive discussions with selected leaders and activists of these organisations. The following aspects of the 'apolitical' organisations have been analysed in detail, using primary data of a quite unconventional type: (a) their micro function of provision of employment generation, leadership qualities etc; and (b) the regional and local manifestation of the wider politico-economic processes in the country and at the global level. The former is considerably influenced by the latter, and also by the ideological foundations of the organisations.

IDEOLOGY, HISTORY & ROLE

The early chapter of the book deals with the major ideological streams of women's movement in India and examines the various movements and organisations in this perspective. The current status of women's movement in the country is examined against this theoretical background. The author examines the history of the growth of women's movement in Kerala in various phases. The analysis proceeds at three levels: (1) the local structure; (2) the role played by international forces; and (3) the role of the State. The comparative statistics of the various phases of the growth of the movement is subsequently daynamised in terms of the interaction of relevant social forces that take place at the above levels. Thus, the growth of the apolitical organisations of women such as mahila mandals and women's co-operatives (which have often been described as 'the' women's organisations) are examined in the light of the changing role of the State.

The political role of social organisations can remain either open or subdued. The political organisations of women which are linked with political parties perform an 'open' political role by organising issue-based struggles. However, the 'apolitical' organisations also, in fact, cannot be politically neutral, though apparently they are so. A detailed account of women's participation in political struggles has been included in the study, besides an analysis

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of the current structure and functions of some of the leading organisations.

An exhaustive discussion of the political and social linkages of the leading organisations in this State of highly politically conscious people, shows how the 'political' politics operate.

The linkages between the State and women's organisations have been examined in terms of public policy and programmes and their implementation. The final chapter is devoted to an evaluation of the recent currents in the women's movement in Kerala and the challenges faced by radical women's organisations in the current socio-political environment in the country

RECENT TRENDS : TOWARDS WELFARE OF THE WEAKER SEX

The limits imposed by the anti-radical strategies compel the radical organisations also to function according to some general patterns of behaviour. The strength of the radical women's movement has considerably deteriorated in the post-Independence period due to factionalism. 'Economism' has enabled them to bring into their ranks certain sections of the women community which could not hitherto been attracted to them. Increased attention given to 'economism' has resulted in the softening of the ideological fervour and the growth of a sort of corruption at the leadership level, at least in the case of some organisations. It is this that prompted some writers even to conclude that women's movement in the post- Independence India is facing serious retrogression.

In the pre- Independence period, the women's movement emerged out of the social and political movements such as the freedom movement, trade union movement, the Ezhava Social Reform Movement etc. Subsequently, ideological polarisation took place; and two broad ideological streams, one radical and the other orthodox, emerged out of this. During the brief interlude when the radical organisations went underground, under the repressive measures of the State in the late 1940's, the elite women's organisations gained considerable strength. This should be accounted for in the immense patronage they received from the government and international agencies. This enabled them to sidetrack women's issues as peripheral to the central problem of development, and not to pose it as a class problem. Hence women began to be considered as a 'weaker section' of the society, and special 'welfare' programmes were included in the Five Year Plans for them.

An important strategy of the State and the dominant classes in society to arrest the growth of radical women's movement was the institutionalisation and bureaucratisation of women's organisations. Organisations such 'mahila mandals' which were formed in the pre-Independence period, out of purely voluntary efforts, were gradually made into links in a very bureaucratic-administrative netowrk. Moreover, various other institutional forms such as cooperatives and social centres were brought into the chain.

The economic illusions created by these organisations made an adverse impact on radical ideologies, and made working of radical organisations difficult. While women's organisations were gradually transformed into 'economic' organisations, particular types of organisations functioned only as part of a moving equilibrium. Thus the traditional 'mahila samajams' are no more the 'fashion' of the day. Their place has been taken over by the co-operatives, and organisations sponsored by the Christian Churches such as social centres. Considering the poverty and misery of the majority of the working members of these organisations are subject to, the above moving equilibria can be explained only in terms of the needs and strategies of the dominant classes and the State.

The authors have taken up a stupendous task of presenting the women's organisations in a new perspective, This study, however, is not free from limitations. One of the drawbacks is the very title of the book. Even with a less generalised title, the importance of this pioneering study would not have declined. Besides, the study could have made an analysis of women's concerns on women's development and implications thereto on defeating women's own interests. The last chapter of the book has slightly fallen into rash generalisitions regarding the current status of research on women in India.

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EARLY HUMAN FOOTPRINTS....

(Contd. from page 12)

Stellenbosch, Fauresmith, Tugela, Aterian and other African tool technologies are discussed in a thorough manner. The last chapter of the book describes the different cultures of the Mesolithic of Africa.The main ones among these are the Nachikufan, Wilton, Smithfield, Tshitolian and Ishangian traditions of South Africa; the Hargesian, Elementeitan, Wilton and Doian etc. of East Africa; and the Heluan, Oranian, Capsian etc. of North Africa.

The only flaw in these chapters, in common with the chapters dealing with Europe, and with India, is that though the first edition of the book came out in 1989, data from the 1980's is not included in the book. This mars an otherwise comprehensive text which brings together data from a large part of the world into an easy-to-read work.

As it stands, Professor Rami Reddy's book fills a lacuna in existing archaeologican publications from India by providing information on Indian, European and African prehistory in one work at an affordable price. In its existing format, however, the book is more of interest for a student of archaeology than for a lay person. With the inclusion of recent developments, discoveries and theoretical debates, it can become an invaluable reference asset to every Indian archaeologist's book-shelf.

Dr. Rima Hooja is Associate Professor of Indian Tradition and Culture at the Kota Open University, Kota, She has a Ph.D in Archaeology from Cambridge University, U.K.

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A PROFILE OF STEEL INDUSTRY

Sutinder Bhatia : BOKARO STEEL PLANT– Some Economic Aspects
Popular Prakashan,Bombay.

Review by P.L.Agrawal

The Bokaro Steel Plant has had a chequered history from its very inception. Conceived at first as a model of Indo-American cooperation in early sixties, it was ultimately the U.S.S.R. which came forward to sign an agreemnet in January 1965, to assist India in building up this 4 m.t. flat products steel plant. But for the Russian assistance, the Indian Steel Industry would have been a tiny one and short by 11 m.t. in capacity today(including Visakhapatnam 3 m.t.). The Russian Rouble credit was on very liberal terms. The repayment was in non-convertible Indian rupees; and this helped not only in the development of our steel industry, but in boosting Indian exports. For this, we must feel grateful to that country.

MODERN TECHNOLOGY BUT.....

The plant when concieved was modern in technology except that instead of adopting emerging technology of continuous casting, Bokaro went in for a massive and costly Stabling Mill which is now proposed to be discarded during modernisation in the next 5 to 8 years. This technology produces cheaper finished steel and improved yield of 9-10 per cent from liquid steel. But Russians have lagged behind in this area. As late as in 1989, U.S.S.R. produced only 17.3 per cent crude steel through CCM out of its total production,as against World Average of 61.1 per cent and Western Europe at 87.7 per cent. The figure for Japan was 93.5 per cent.

PLANNING LAPSES

In the construction of Bokaro Steel Plant, whatever could go wrong went wrong. One of the weaker aspects is that we do not plan as thoroughly as we should before we undertake construction of such a massive project, with the result that the quantities of excavation, R.C.C., steel structures etc. keep increasing. We keep on adding facilities while under construction and in turn, delay the implementation and increase cost. The Indian agencies which provide various services, undertake supplies of various items including structures and equipments, suffer from similar weakness and fault in delivery as well as quality. The result is that projects get delayed and costs go up enormously. In Bokaro, Stage I was delayed by 86 months and the cost over-run was 146 per cent from Rs. 671 crores to 981 crores. Stage II was delayed by 99 months and cost over run was 232 per cent. The CRM II which was taken out of Russian package mid-way, and given to on Indian consulting firm, MECON, was delayed by 71 months.

It is not as if we have learnt any lessons. We keep repeating the same mistakes again and again, and our projects costs keep multiplying.

FALLING PRODUCTION

On the production front also, the performance of Bokaro has been in fits and bits, and production has either stagnated and even come down in certain years e.g. the ingot steel production went up from 1.19 m.t. in 1978-79 to 1.43 m.t. in the following year, and a year later came down to 0.92 m.t., again it went upto 1.83 m.t. in 1982-83 and came down to 1.68 m.t. in 1983-84. Again in 1989-90, it came down from 2.77 m.t. to 2.65 m.t. The production almost stagnated between 1981-82 to 1986-87 and again between 1988-89 to 1990-91.

It is a pity that while the book was published in 1991, the figures given are upto year 1987-88 only,and the author has not dealt with the above in a convincing manner.

The explanations given for lower production like aging of plant, shortage of power, poor quality of raw material, high ash in coal, turndown in global steel demand etc. explain only a part of the problem; and some of these factors are not valid. Certainly a plant which has commissioned its last unit of CRM II only in November 1990, could not have aged in 1986 to give lower production. Similarly, the quality of raw materials like high ash in coal, high Al2 O3 in ore are not the reasons.

ABOVE ALL – THE MANAGERIAL FACTOR

While the author mentions about poor technological discipline and poor maintenance of equipment, the key factor of managerial changes at SAIL and BSL level, and its ineffectiveness in the period of lower and stagnating production do not find a mention. The continuity of management and long tenure of top managerial personnel are factors which have enabled TISCO to maintain high capacity utilisation, whereas SAIL performance has suffered due to frequent changes at top and in key positions. This is applicable to Bokaro as well.

The author has rightly pointed out, the plant is heavily overmanned, the men in position being 4.5 times of those recommended by the consultants. Part of the reason for this has been the laxity in manpower control in the beginning and compulsions to absorb a large amount of surplus construction labour. Even in 1986-87, as many as 4842 men were working on the construction side. SAIL has taken belated decision to freeze the man-power and to provide handsome voluntary retirement scheme, and these are having some effect. In 1989-90, there was a net reduction of 778 men or 1.5 per cent of total at BSL.

As the author has pointed out, the wages have been increasing in real terms, and this is much faster than the cost of living. The increase between 1960-1982 was 221 per cent and again between 1982 - 1987 by another 173 per cent.

However, the increase in wages has not lead to increase in productivity or reduction in cost or wastage. As a matter of fact, productivity went down in some years. Average employment cost has gone to as high as Rs. 30853 in 1986-87. The author has rightly suggested that future wage revision should be based on production incentive and on productivity increase rather than neutralisation of cost of living index.

While the wage negotiations are done centrally for all the steel plants, where all central trade unions are party to negotiations and wage settlement, even then loss of produc-

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tion does take place due to inter-union rivalry. The production loss due to IR problems in 1986-87 alone was 63000 t. of ingot, 91800 t. of slab and 95900 t. of H. R. casts. These are not very small figures. The present system of central wage negotiations every four years needs complete rethinking.

MODERNISATION

The author is on very slippery ground when she talks of modernisation scheme which she has listed after collection from various sources. As for example, suggestions of blast furnance burden metallisation and oil injection are not economical, and suggestion to have bite and back rolling method on slabbing nutt will not be applicable in year 2000 A.D. since CCM will completely replace this mill. More important things are left out: like pre-treatment of hot metal, secondary refining of steel which would be necessary for better quality of products and improving of operation.

AND OTHER MATTERS

There are a few typographical errors like reversing the figures for *TISCO-IISCO* for profitability on page 186, which gives a completely distorted financial picture; and there is mistake in showing a profit of Rs. 60.95 crores for IISCO in 1985-86 instead of loss to the same extent. Similarly, the figures of Hot Metal production in Table 7.4 on page 189 are incongruous. On page 154, in Table 5.38, the export figures are given as total since inception, but the year is not mentioned. The norms for coke ash and M 10 on page 205 are also completely out of tune and not applicable anymore.

The author has tried to correlate investment on the Steel Plant with investment on ancillary industries, which is not feasible. Moreover, healthy growth of ancillary and small and medium scale industry only takes place when these are not wholly dependant on one steel plant, as has been the developments around Bhilai and Jamshedpur.

Working out of social benefits to the community and to the general public is a difficult thing to do. The author has quoted figures like Rs. 216 crores and 346 crores, which look controversial.

With all its trials and tributations, Bokaro today has emerged as a strong and healthy link in the development of Steel Industry in India and that of SAIL.

The author needs complimenting for her scholarly and diligent study, giving all facets of its growth and development from inception since 1986-87, and her book will act as a useful material on Indian Steel Industry.

After his Ph.D. from Sheffield, Dr. P.L. Agrawal served his alma mater, the Benares Hindu University, College of Mining and Metallurgy, for nearly a decade before taking up his professional career in the Indian Steel Industry: Rourkela (12 years) Durgapur (1 1/2 years) Bokaro (1 year) back to Rourkela Chief Executive (6 1/2 years). He brought all that experience to the Steel Authority of India as its Chairman for about 2 1/2 years. He is a well sought-after advisor and consultant in India and abroad.

TRIBALS IN A TIGER RESERVE

K.C. Alexander *et al:* TRIBLAS, REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT. Rawat Publications, Jaipur-1991. pp 156.

Short Comment by G. Krishnan Kutty

This study by K.C.Alexander R.R. Prasad and M.P. Jahangirdar is a very good contribution to cultural anthropology and related areas of research in India.

Though tribal life in India is normally idyllic, it has created complacency in the community and has limited opportunities for prosperity. This is the central theme of this short book.

DISPLACED FROM SIMILIPAL TIGER RESERVE

This monograph deals with principles and policies of rehabilitation of tribal families of nine villages which are proposed to be displaced from the Similipal Tiger Reserve in Orissa. There are 232 tribal households in those nine villages. The research is based on the house to house survey of all the 232 households problems, criteria for fixation of compensation for their immovable properties and so on.

In short, the study has come out with a package of principles and policies for rehabilitation of the tribals from the Similipal Tiger Reserve, Orisssa. Some guidelines for rehabilitation are also given in this work.

There are six chapters in all. They deal with the major topics like ecological and social setting, rehabilitation experiences, the approach to rehabilitation, rehabilitation measures, summary of findings and so on.

REHABILITATION A GOD-SENT BOOM

The chapter (IV) on rehabilitation expriences and guidelines is a very good one. The experiences of the "oustees" are well dealt with in this chapter. Rehabilitation measures are dealt with in the sixth chapter. The authors have dealt with social and cultural rehabilitation also. It is pointed out, towards the end of the study that the displaced persons "will forget the traumas of shifting from forest and will come to believe that rehabilitation was a God-sent boom for them".

It is probably worth while to examine the methodology of this research endeavour in relation to other areas in the country, with suitable modifications, in probing into tribal rehabilitation. It is possible to say that the authors have made a bold attempt to study this neglected area and have completed a new discipline of research in anthropology.

G.Krishnan Kutty, recently Fellow, IIAS, Shimla, is now back to his academic world in Trivandrum.

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SOUTH AFRICA & ITS MAN OF DESTINY

A Special Feature based on four books on South Africa & Nelson Mandela reviewed by Vijay Gupta

Editor's Note:

Perhaps it was so destined ! At the turn of the century, South Africa became the training ground of India's first Man of Destiny, Mahatma Gandhi, and the field of his several experiments with truth ! That is where he learnt first lessons of his fight,developed the skills and sharpened his tools of struggle – passive resistance and non-cooperation, self-discipline and assertion of self-identity in the fight for human dignity and equal rights through *ashimsa* and *satyagrah*. Almost a briefless barrister at home before he left the shores of India, he returned a seasoned fighter of many a battle, a victor in some, a hero nonetheless! He was lionised for all that, and soon elevated to the mantle of a 'Mahatma!'.

Decades later, as this turbulent and tortuous century of super-human endeavours on one hand and hundreds of man-made disasters and human tragedies on the other, is coming to a close, the Union of South Africa has nursed and seasoned (and given to itself) its new Man of Destiny, a relentless fighter in the cause of human dignity, equality and liberty, one who has stood firm like a rock through all the viccissitudes and trials of a long-drwan struggle against the forces of apartheid and tyranny.

Naturally, we in India, because of our old emotional and historical links, if not with the regime, at least with the people, have grown to watch with interest and admiration the once an unequal struggle reaching its inevitable climax. And we have watched the slow emergence of the Man of Africa's New Destiny – Nelson Mandela.

From time to time, several books have come out, devoted & dedicated to the new star blazing its trail on the horizon of South Africa. Now that the final victory seems to be in sight, we have had the good fortune of receiving a series of short reviews of four topical and recent books on the theme. Professor Vijay Gupta, Chairperson, Centre for West Asian and African Studies in JNU School of International Studies has been most helpful in sending us his comments, so that we are in a position to offer a Special Feature on the theme of South Africa's Man of Destiny.

A GUIDE TO INDIAN SOURCES OF AFRICAN HISTORY

S.A.I. Tirmizi: INDIAN SOURCES FOR AFRICAN HISTORY, *2 Volumes, International Writers Emporium, Delhi,* pp. Vol, I - 610, Rs. 390/- Vol. II, 302, Rs. 300/-.

Dr. S.A.I. Trimizi has made a very valuable contibution by making available a bibliography of immense and useful material on Indian-Africa History. The book is a mine of information on the history of relations of thousands of years, on the portrayal of relations conducted by European powers with their different colonies and their peoples e.g. India and Africa, and Indians in Africa.

This guide to the sources for the History of Nations focuses attention on the Indian sources of African history. Dr. Tirmizi, a historian and scholar of repute, well familiar with all the languages in which material is available in Indian archives, has provided us a key to the thousands of cubic meter of material. This material should make it possible for students of Indo-African and African affairs to under-take research based on original sources.

The guide covers the period 1758-1950, and deals mainly with East and South Africa, but data in respect of the Horn, North-West and Central Africa are not totally absent. The author enlists the records relating to Africa available in the Home Department/Home Ministry, Foreign Department/Ministry of External Affairs, Indian Overseas Department, Commonwealth Relations Department, Revenue Agriculture and Commerce/ Revenue and Agriculture/Education, Health and Lands Department, Commerce and Industry/Commerce Department G.O.I. and private archives of eminent Indians.

Dr. Tirmizi gives a 42 pages introduction telling of the significant developments in Indo-African relations, details of which can be found in various documents. The data has been entered identifying relevant documents amongst the records of the branch concerned, as gleaned from the voluminous indexes to them.

All entries are arranged in chronological order under the respective branches of the government departments. Dr. Tirmizi suggests that, while calling for the documents in the National Archives, the reference assigned to each entry by the creating branch at the time of creation or registration and given in brackets at the end of each entry should be used. This should also be done when citing the item in any publication.

In 610 pages, he covers eight Ministeries, Departments and branches whose records are maintained in National Archives in New Delhi and private archives of eminent Indians – including Dadabhai Naoroji, G.K. Gokhale, V.S. Srinivasa Sastri, M.K. Gandhi, N.B. Khare and Banarasi Das Chaturvedi.

The 2nd volume deals with the colonizing Europe, colonized Africa and Asia exporting manpower. This volume deals with the period which witnessed the end of (the official disappearance of) slavery and its replacement by a new form of subjection called 'indentured labour". It refers to increased Indian settlement and clash of interests with the European immigrants. Dr. Tirmizi, through these volumes, leads us to immense literature concerning Indian leaders' response to their clash of interests in Africa. He provides information about the material available in Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi; Sabarmati Ashram, Ahmedabad; The National Gandhi Museum, New Delhi; State Archives of Andhra Pradesh (Hyderabad) and Uttar Pradesh (Lucknow).

A brief introduction to the history of state administrations which were responsible for preserving records helps us to have a better insight into various types of records.

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Although Dr. Tirmizi accepts that his endavour has not been fully successful because of immense size of material, yet it is indeed a remarkable contribution to research on relations between Asia, Africa and Europe. This book must be kept in all libraries which claim to have readers interested in Indian politics and foreign relations.

(Vijay Gupta)

THE LONG STRUGGLE FOR EQUALITY

Nelson Mandela: THE STRUGGLE IS MY LIFE
Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1990, p. 282 Rs. 135/-

Nelson Mandela is a political leader with a difference. He is at once a legend and a living hero. This book was first published in England on the occasion of his 60th birthday with the purpose of campaigning for his release from Robben Island prison and the release of all South African political prisoners. The aim was to make available valuable documents, speeches and writings of Nelson Mandela, along with photographs, which were of great importance, since they were rare and reflected his inspiring image.

The Indian edition is not a reproduction of the first edition, but has been enriched by adding new speeches, statements, documents and pictures.

The book enables its readers to understand the maturity of the leadership of the African National Congress (ANC)in grasping the reality by clearly analysing the character of the racist rulers. For instance, we read that Mandela and his comrades were under no illusion that the aims of the South Africa Government joining the allied forces against Hitler"to fight against oppression of freedon" did not include freedom for Africans. We find no vagueness in the ANC Youth League Manifesto issued in 1944 which said: "... it would be the highest folly to believe that after the war, South Africa will treat the Africans as citizens with the right to live free ... South African blood – of Whites and Africans alike – has been shed to free the white peoples of Europe, while Africans within the Union remain in bondage". *(p. 15)*

But the ANC was not demoralised by the betrayal by whites, and its Youth League had the vision of a democratic South Africa where all, irrespective of colour or creed, were to be equal. The goal of equal, free and democratic society was explicitly spelled out in the Basic Policy Document of ANC Youth League issued in 1948, when the racist whites were tightening their grip and preparing to launch apartheid policies. Mandela and his campatriots said, "the Congress Youth League believes that the goal of political organization and action is the achievement of true democracy... In such a true democracy, all the nationalities and minorities would have their fundamental human rights guaranteed in a democratic constitution" *(p. 21)*.

To express their support to the establishment of a democratic regime, the ANC with all sincerity and faith organized a National Day of Protest on 26 June 1950, ... "the headquarters of the National Day of Protest Co-ordinating Committee were at the offices of the ANC, Johannesburg. Messers W.M. Sisulu, Y.A. Calpialia were elected Joint Secretaries. Mr. N.R. Mandela was placed in charge of the office. Members of the National Executive and other leading members of Congress were given specific duties. Dr. J.S. Moroka and Mr. O.R. Tambo visited Natal to assist in the implementation of this decision. Mr. Sisulu toured the Eastern Province, concentrating on Port Elizabeth and East London. Mr. Gour Rebede went to OFS. Messers C.S. Ramohonoe and E. Mofutsanyana also toured the Free State. Mr. D. Tloome toured the Western Transvaal and Kimberley. Mr. Moses Kotane was instructed to organize the Western Province. Provincial, district, regional and local co-ordinating committees were established throughout the country". *(pp. 32-33)*. In contrast to this picture of meticulous organisation, the whites (rulers) had called the ANC ' 'a group of a few disgruntled elements'. This statement was meant to reduce the political importance of ANC activities and under-rate its role.

The white rulers had, in reality, realized the strength of the anti-racist movement, under the banner of ANC, and had got scared of the rising popularity of Nelson Mandela. In the words of Mandela, "The government launched its reactionary offensive and struck at us. Between July last year (1952) and August this year, 47 leading members from ANC and Indian National Congress in Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth and Kimberley were arrested, tried and convicted for launching the Defiance Campaign and given suspended sentences ranging from three months to two years ..." *(p. 35)*

"...government ordered Moses Kotane, Yusuf Dadoo, J.B. Marks, David Bopape and Johnsen Ngwevela to resign from the Congress and ... prohibited them from attending political gatherings and confined them to Johannesburg" ...same were the orders for Walter Sisulu, Mandela, Chief Luthuli, Dr. C.M. Naicker and many others *(pp. 35- 36)*.

These steps of the racist rulers clearly indicated their fright of the expanding anti-racist forces, operating and enlarging despite the ban on Defiance Campaign. Many African leaders were imprisoned under Riotous Assemblies Act and Suppression of Communism Act.

The intensification of repression and the extensive use of the bans were designed to immobilise every ANC worker and to check the growing democratic freedom movement as reflected in the adoption of Freedom Charter in 1955.

The next step of the racist government was to arrest 156 political leaders in a mass police swoop on 5th December 1957, and charge them with high treason – a grave charge carrying the death penalty. The police warrant accused them of participating in a treasonable conspiracy, inspired by international communism, to overthrow the South African state by violent means. The trial dragged on for four years, with the last accused being acquitted in 1961.

During the trial, Mandela expressed his views on various issues. His statements proved to be future outlines of ANC's activities and are still relevant. For example, on one-party system, Mandela said "... it is a question of

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democracy. If democracy would be best expressed by one party system, then I would examine the proposition very carefully. But if democracy could be best expressed by a multi-party system then I would examine that carefully". Refering to South African multi-party system where non-Europeans were denied political rights, Mandela said "... this is most vicious despotism you could think of". *(p. 93).*

While the treason trial was in its fourth year, the racist police shot down 69 and wounded 176 unarmed Africans at Sharpville. This atrocious massacre drew international attention. In South Africa, the government imposed a state of emergency and banned African National Congress.

Mandela went underground and toured the country secretly with Walter Sisulu, organizing for anticipated three-day stay-at-home campaign. During this period, he also addressed appeals to various sections of the population, calling for their support for the proposed National Convention.

On 26th June 1961, ANC observed Freedom Day. Mandela issued a statement. "The Struggle is my life", and explained reasons for going underground. He said, "We plan to make government impossible". He asked people not to pay taxes as they had no right to vote. "Why should we continue enriching those who steal the products of our sweat and blood. Those who exploit us and refuse us the right to organize trade unions... We call upon the international bodies to expel South Africa and... to severe economic, diplomatic relations with the country". *(p.120)*

The next 140 pages of the book cover various speeches which Mandela delivered during the period of his underground activities and statements, letters, and trial proceedings. All this materianl helps us in understanding the clarity of Madela's thoughts, his commitment, his dedication and his hope in the future – a future without racial discrimination, and without apartheid. After the trial, Mandela and his comrades were imprisoned for life and long-term jail.

In prison, Nelson Mandela held on to his views, and showed determination despite solitary confine rigorous imprisonment and isolation from the politica tivities.

It is a great satisfaction reading Mandela's speeches, arguments and defence. While reading, one feels that one is participating in the events. The reader becomes an active freedom fighter and sides with the oppressed, discriminated and humiliated, and admires his (Mandela's) magnanimity in seeking an egalitarian society.

The book is an abridged insight into South African politics, a commentary on apartheid and a summarized study of anti-apartheid struggle. Even those who have keenly followed the South African political scenario, will benefit from reading it.

(Vijay Gupta)

A VISION OF MANDELA'S SOUTH AFRICA

E.S. Reddy : NELSON MANDELA, *Media Foundation Sterling Publishers, New Delhi, 1990, Rs. 150/-.*

Dr.E.S. Reddy has done an immensely important work by compiling important statements and speeches of the heroic South African freedom – fighter Dr. Nelson Mandela.. Since these statements cover the period after his release from the 27 years of imprisonment, they provide us an insight into the working of his mind today. The speeches show that, despite tortures of the prison life, Mandela did not lose any of his militancy, his straightforwardnness or his cool. His persuasiveness and argumetation are so logical that the 'whites' have no way but to agree with him. His speeches depict the Charisma in him. They reflect the reasons due to which he has emerged as a great statesman of his nation and the hope of many millions. He stands out as a symbol of human rights.

These speeches depict his deep and clear understanding of people, irrespective of their colour or creed. He has a good sense of diagnosing the ills by knowing the pulse of the people.

Mandela says that "The apartheid destruction on our subcontinent is incalculable. The fabric of family life of millions of our people has been battered. Millions are homeless and unemployed.Our economy lies in ruins and our people are embroiled in political strife". *(page 3).*

He argues that the violence of apartheid has forced the democratic South Africans to launch an armed struggle as a purely defensive action. This strife has forced the peace and democracy loving people of South Africa to launch an armed struggle as a purely defensive action.

He stesses on the need for unity of the nation and need for democratic structures. He says"... join forces. Indians, Coloureds – Africans and freedon- loving Whites, to give apartheid its final blow ... let us develop active democracy. Democratic structures which serve the people must be established in every school, township, village, factory and farm". *(p.27).*

Nelson Mandela believes that for a democratic solution "The people need to be consulted on who will negotiate and on the content of such negotiations. Negotiations cannot take place above the heads or behind the backs of our people. It is our belief that the future of our country can only be determined by a body which is democratically elected on a non-racial basis – Negotiation on the dismantling of apartheid will have to be addressed by a body which is democratically elected on a non-racial basis."*(p. 5).*

For total abolishing of the apartheid system, Mandela lays down principles of economic restructuring: "...it is quite obvious that the economic power represented by the reality of the excessive concentration of power in a few hands has to change. We make this demand not as a result of any imperative that might be said to derive from ideological convictions... what we would like to say is that, while we look at economic models and study the experiences (of capitalism or socialism) of other countries, we should not forget that we are dealing with South Africa, with its own history, its own reality and its own imperatives. One of these

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imperatives is to end white domination in all its forms, to de-racialise the exercise of economic power". *(p. 52)*.

He emphasises that "the land question must also be addressed within the context of restructuring of the old economic power relations". Dwelling on the question of nationalization, Mandela says "... issue of nationalization of assets that might at the moment he privately owned", needs further discussions and debate on it cannot be closed. *(pp. 54-55)*.

Mandela calls for a debate on measures to end economic disparities on "present day apartheid absurdity ... Whereby public per capita social spending on the Whites is at least six times higher than on Africans. However complicated the economics of bridging their gap and instituting a rational system of social welfare which actually increases social welfare, something will have to be done in this area as a matter of urgency". *(p. 57)*.

To find trends for bridging the gap, he suggests ... "obviously enormous savings will be made as a result of the abolition of the multi-headed hydra represented by the various apartheid administrative structures. Defence spending will also have to be reduced radically as a result of the thinning down of the defence establishment, a process which must also lead to the conversion of military production facilities to civilian needs". *(p. 57)*.

Mandela pleads for continuation of sanctions till apartheid is abolished. Sanctions must be maintained as "we are still ruled by a white minority government. Millions of our people are still confined in bantustans and other group areas. In other words, fundamental change has yet to take place. The struggle must therefore continue ... Sanctions must be maintained ... as a peaceful means to end apartheid. Given the fact that apartheid has not ended, it is only logical that one should continue to use this weapon of struggle". *(pp. 65- 66)*.

Once apartheid is abolished, he further pleads "we need your assistance to develop our economy and to participate in the building of a Southern African Community of free and equal nations which can become an engine of growth, development and peace in Africa" *(pp 74-75)*.

Mandela informs the Eureopean Parliament of the determination of his fellows in the ANC and the Democratic Front: "The liberated South Africa will continue to count on your support as it marks to reinforce and consolidate the institutions of a democratic society that will be necessary to guarantee that tyranny in any form does not raise its ugly head again". *(pp. 74-75)*.

While addressing the British Industry, Mandela presents the outline of a new society. He says, "The kind of freedom we seek is not difficult to define. Its fundamental principles are no different from those which you hold dear in this country. We want to see everybody enjoying the right to vote. The basic human rights of all our citizens have to be protected and guaranteed, to ensure the genuine liberty of every individual. The law, before which all should be equal, should rule supreme. The racial and ethnic divisions and discriminatory practices that constitute the apartheid system have to be ended completely and without qualifications". *(p. 93)*.

He adds, "Private capital, both domestic and international, will have a vital contribution to make to the economic and social reconstruction of South Africa after apartheid. It will be critical that economy grows rapidly and at rates that supersede population growth. This cannot happen without large inflows of foreign capital, including British capital". *(p. 95)*. Assuring the British investors, he goes on "... be confident about the security of your investments, an adequate return on your capital and a general climate of peace and stability ...". *(p. 96)*.

Besides statements and speeches, Dr. Reddy has included Mandela's Paper (sent from prison in 1989) on Negotiated Settlement of the Problem and the ANC Freedom Charter. Dr. Reddy's 18 page introduction to the collection provides the common man a concise historical background on the issues which Mandela has dealt with in his speeches.

For understanding the ongoing complexities in South Africa and policies of the African National Congress on peace, violence, racism, democracy, political and economic paths this is a very good compilation and is strongly recommend to all interested in international politics in general and South Africa in particular.

(Vijay Gupta)

TOWARDS THE DAWN . . .

Hari Sharan Chhabra : SOUTH AFRICA: *YEAR AFTER MANDELA'S RELEASE* (Foreword by Nelson Mandela) *Africa Publications Delhi (1991) pp. 150, Rs. 150/-.*

This book is a collection of articles or rather writings of Hari Sharan Chhabra since the release of the ANC leader Dr. Nelson Mandela. The articles are of topical value and tell us in concise language the latest political developments in South Africa. Most of the articles are based on author's personal meetings with various leaders of African, Indian and White communities and, therefore, have been written with greater authenticity than generally found in Indian writings on Africa.

The advantage of reading this collection is seen in the fact that it makes it easy for readers to understand the ANC anti-apartheid movement and Indian point of view. Chhabra does not hide that his hero is Mandela and his party is 'ANC', and his job is to highlight their ideas and glorify their victories. He favours ANC programmes and proposals and justifies them. Chhabra has not analysed the fears and psyche of those who strongly feel that the rule of majority may bring an end to their life of comfort. His analysis of the Whites' political behaviour leads us to conclude that Whites are prepared to share their political power, but they are not ready to give up economic privileges. According to them, the Africans can also strug-

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gle in the capitalist–oriented competitive South African society and can acquire the privileges enjoyed today by the Whites only. The Whites are not satisfied with ANC Documentation Economic Policy *(appendix III, pp. 124-144)*.

Chhabra writes: "While removing discriminatory legislation, de Klerk obviously remains a man of status quo. He would like the Whites to continue to enjoy their privileged position and the Blacks to remain what they are, poor and impoverished. By repealing Land Acts, for example, de Klerk would expect the Blacks to buy land from the Whites..*(p. 113)* Even when he talks of dismantling apartheid, he has left no one in doubt that he would like to preserve the interests and supremacy of the White community *(p.8)*.

The issues before the South Africa Government and ANC a year back, at the time of release of Nelson Mandela, were: Repeal of all discriminatory laws and regulations based on colour of the skin or race of the citizen; Release of political prisoners, stopping of political trials, lifting of state of emergency, and the return of political exiles; Formation of a constituent assembly and drafting a new constitution. These steps were directed to lead South Africa towards a democratic state. But the author writes that " this would be impossible as long as the linchpin of the entire apartheid system, the Population Registration Act passed in 1950, which defines South Africa's main racial groups, would remain." *(p. 38)*.

A democratic government can be ushered in if, according to author, the "ANC demand for an interim government and also the demand for an elected constituent assembly to draw up a new constitution" *(p. 13)* is accepted and elections are held on the principle of one man one vote. This is being opposed by the de Klerk administration. De Klerk "....envisaged instead a power sharing arrangement with constitutional rights where no group would dominate". *(p. 38)*.

Chhabra deals in detail with the on-going violence claiming hundreds of African lives. He correctly states that before things begin moving in South Africa in the direction of implementation of Freedom Charter for a democratic non-racial society, the black factional violence has to stop. According to him, violence has its origin in age old rivalry between the tribalist party Inkatha. Freedom Party led by Gatesha Buthelizi and the egalitarian nationalists of African National Congress. Mandela has also blamed the security forces for encouraging the black factional violence *(p. 10)*

Chhabra writes that there is a lot of misinformation about this violence. He asserts that it is not between blacks and blacks, or is not inter-tribal. "... the fact of the matter is that it was political violence between the supporters of apartheid system, that is, Buthelezi's Zulus and the suporters of the ANC who belong to all tribes in the country... The ANC accused the Government of being the "hidden hand" behind the violence. Since the Inkatha had been killing many Zulu supporters of the ANC also, it was clear that it was not a tribal violence". *(p. 11)*

Since this book has been written in a very simple and lucid style and covers up the vast span of South African politics, the readers will find it of great help in understanding the various problems which South African people, the ANC and the Government face today.

Prof. Dr. Vijay Gupta is Chairperson, Centre for West Asian and African Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

A SCIENCE TEXT BOOK IN HINDI

G.S.Nathawat, P.D.Sharma and R.K.Sahni : *VANASPATI SHASTRA (In HindI) Ramesh Book Depot, Jaipur (1988), 784 pp. Rs. 45/- (Paperback)*

Review by Purshotam Kaushik

Vanaspati Shastra is a text-book of Botany written in Hindi. I ought to be grateful to Shri G.B.K. Hooja, I.A.S. (Retd.) formerly Vice-Chancellor of Gurukula Kangri Vishwavidyalaya, Hardwar, for introducing me to this beautiful text-book of intentionally prepared for 1st year T.D.C. and P.M.T. courses. There are several text-books of Botany in English for our undergraduate students, but there has been a paucity of good text-books of Botany in Hindi, in spite of the fact that we have a large number of universities, colleges and research organisations that boast of boosting the Lab to Land programmes.

Although we became free in 1947, yet the same British pattern of imparting education in our educational institutions prevails, sheltered by our bureaucratic set-up, and practically no due respect has been given to Hindi. There has been a long-standing demand in our country for scientific literature in Hindi, the offical language of the nation. Aacharya Goverdhan Shastri of Gurukula Kangri Vishwavidyalaya was one of the earlier scholars known for his venture of writing a text-book of Chemistry/Physies in Hindi as early as the second decade of the 20th century, while we were under the British yoke. We certainly succeeded in throwing off the yoke of slavery peacefully under the inspiration of our great national leaders and hence achieved freedom apparently, but mentally our people shall remain slaves of old and foreign systems.

The authors trio, working in the prestigious University of Rajasthan at Jaipur, start with the history of biology, and then describe in detail the cell, the tissues, histology, nomenclature and classification; bacteria, mycoplasmas and viruses in addition to algae, fungi, bryophyta, pteridophyta, gymnosperms, and taxonomy and life hostory of angiosperms; and then discuss plants and human welfare.

The plant-physiology has been covered under 8 separate chapters, besides a detailed account of genetics, plant-ecology and enviroonmental pollution. the technical terms in English have been placed in parentheses.

This volume is useful for the students and teachers alike and should be provided a place of pride in good libraries of our college and universities.

Dr. Purshotam Kaushik teaches Botany and Microbiology at the Gurukala Kangri Vishwavidyalaya, Hardwar. He also supervised Govt. of India M.O.En. Project on "Study on Enviroonmental Biology of the Himalayan Orchids" and U.G.C. Project on Lectins. He recently visited the Universities of London and Cambridge, R.B.G., Kew (U.K.), and Institute Pasteur, Paris.

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Poems by K.V.Raghupathi

IT RAINS... IT RAINS . . . . .

It rains and rains and rains for hours,
day-long, with no time
and space, with no limitations and divisions, with no religion, faiths, and beliefs
It rains and rains and rains,
chaotically and violently, freely
and frankly, unconsciously and selflessly, without any human knowledge, it knows nothing

The sky and earth are one in stimulating copulation
The world rests in an oblivion state of ecstasy
Nothing seems inoperable, static, but deathless
Except the falling tresses of crystal water in blithe
That transport life into utter enthralling quietitude
Here in the lonely, lonesome, cloudy, rain-smelt enmeshed silent house
Sorrounded by water nothing but ceaseless flow of undrinkable water
I am like a scrap of twig floating on the cruising waters
Travelling silently with the incessant ebb and flow
Eluding citadels of time, dissolving like a fanciful thought
Unkissed by the fleecy memories of the past
Untouched by the reveries of the present
Undaunted by the fretful dreams and fears of mythical future
Chanting, nothing, musing nothing.

The day-long torrential roaring fury reduced
Subsided into moderate prattling of kettle drums
Then to soft murmuring of Vedic incantations
Then to lovely enticing showers of autumn leaves
Then to sizzling and tickling drizzlings...

The black gargantuan clouds parted and drifted in fulfilment of their quest
The sky as if quivered from long torpor showing its bare blue chest
The sun between the wearied drearied languid clouds dazzling with all rippling smiles
It is evening copper-shining light
The earth woke up to the light from deep chaotic beatings of pourings
The visible light scattered sparkling in puddles
The muddy-brown water shines to the light
The trees gambol, and rejuvenated and resurrected
The world like a justborn red-purple babe, exultant and mirthful.

Shri. K.V. Raghupathi is a poet from Tirupati. His collection 'Echoes Silent' has been published by Writers' Workshop, Calcutta.

I

These yellow leaping tongues of flames
from the burning dead in a dried, pitted, broken pond
in the cool evening yellow light
...speak thus in calm reflective tone:
all these chittered sizzling philosophies
gambole while beating their hollowed drums
on the pale, cool, still waters in the winter.

II

The last flight
the last joy
the last hope
it can never be so for a bird in the sky.
For a man it is always between hope and despair.

III

Birds crisscross in the sky
but are never aware of the sky.
Fish swim in the water
but are never conscious of the water.
Men move here and there
but are conscious of every thing.

IV

The tree grows
and it grows within
Man grows
but grows without.

V

The moon in the pail of water
is the moon in miniature,
pour down the water
yet the moon is not flat
but as round as in the sky.

VI

The seed is small
what grows out of it is enormous
The inside never grows
it is there, it exists
it is hollow, infinite hollow.

VII

Every book is a corpse in the grave
words are like worm eaten flesh
essence is like marrowless white bones.

VIII

The ruins lay before me in timelessness
are the ruins of mown history
for, am I not part of vast sea of humanity?

IX

It(creature) wants to survive.
it survives and hence fears not.
But man wants to survive
and constantly thinks about surviving
and hence he lives in fear.
He who wants to survive will not survive
He who does not want to survive will survive.

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TWO COMMENTS

POET IN SEARCH OF IDENTITY

Lajpat Nagpal : TWILIGHT

C.K. Publications. Nagrota Bagwan (1989) pp. 70. (Paper back,) Rs. 40/- Hard-Bound, Rs. 60/-.

Comment by Vijay Mohan Sethi

With the fifty nine poems of *Twilight,* Dr. Lajpat Nagpal makes his debut in the literary field. The collection has been hailed (in the Foreword) as an example of "compulsive writing, embodying deeply felt experience."

The poet, however, presents no viable philosophy of life, but has his reader oscillating between the physical and the metaphysical plains. His belief that "reality is not defined in isms/ is outside/and beyond them" makes him a seeker who is ever in the throes of struggling for identity. "Shall I ever cross/the waters of life?" — is his constant wail.

But the waters of life are troubled, the suffering and the pain being wrought by inequalities and social injustice. The reason, the poet is involved in life's exigencies. Touched by the plight of the poor he bursts forth:

"Cleanliness for them
is a cake of soap
which they cannot afford to possess."

Implied in these "woes of want" is the exploitation of the toiling man to which the poet alludes thus in 'Anonymous':

Many a mansion has he helped
to build
but for the living of his own
he has a hut, in name
where he goes in the evening
Stinking through filth and dirt
to eat his hungers
and to drink his sorrow all.

A little later, as the poet is caught in the enigma of human existence, the reader is in for a good deal of intellectual gymnasium. Henceforth, his poems read like riddles which when solved may give the reader a feeling of satisfaction and relief.

Nagpal, at times, is quite effective in the use of images to bring the reader to the twilight of existence. In the title poem he avers:

"Semilit tunnel
the pedlars pass through
both ways
at will.
What is there on the other end?
Garden, Desert
or Sea?

Will any one
of the passers-by
hold me by the hand
to get me
into the secret ?"

In 'Ebb and Flow' he speaks of the old man thus: He is all/a white turban and a walking stick. And in 'Guarantee' where he says "Mother is around/the babe shall endure" he shows himself under the influence of Raja Rao whose image of the Mother Cat and the Kittens is well-known.

The poet, reaches the height of his poetic skill in 'God is Waiting' where he freely uses all his stock-in-trade. The poem is marked with precision, simplicity, spontaneity and imagination. He asks some questions:

"What house is this
with its door open
beside the grove of trees ?

A temple, a mosque
or a church ?
No one is around.
Has anyone stepped in ?

And resumes a few lines hence:

I wait in silence
for the devotee
to come and bow his head

on the sill, below
at the open gate
that will never close.

Such a promising poet, the reader feels, must do a little more home-work to exploit his full poetic talent. He also needs to concentrate on his diction to make it a fit vehicle for his soul's homeward journey.

The printing of the book is good and the reader should find the poems enjoyable.

Dr. Vijay Mohan Sethi teaches in the Government P.G. College, Dharamsala

II Comment by T. Vasudeva Reddy

Dr. Lajpat Nagpal, with this book of poetry, has established himself as a poet who has a profound message to convey to the world and who gives expression to his deeply felt feelings and thoughts. He tries to articulate his experiences, rich, wide and varied in a metaphysical style that is quite characteristic of him. As such there is an element of seriousness in his poerty that lends density as well as solemnity to his work.

The opening poem 'A Glimpse' presents more than a glimpse of his yearning for a joy divine and his endless quest for the fulfilment of life.

'My Quest' presents a thematic continuation of the former inasmuch as it presents an assiduous search for the meaning of life and true values embedded in life. The thematic structure rests on the image of gold which stands for the true values of life.

'Chaos' presents an orderly pattern of verse divided into six stanzas, consisting of six lines each.

'Twilight' the title poem, basically philosophical in thought, is rich in its symbolic significance. It draws tthe poet's continuous quest for light and ends in a note of optimism.

The metaphysical vein of the writer is quite obvious from a remarkable poetic piece 'Illusion and Reality', which presents the dialectical relation of the two antithetical concepts which play the game of hide and seek on the bemused and confounded human being. 'Borrowed Glory' is yet another feather in the cap of the poet who presents, in a spirit of righteous indignation, the bitter truth of the sordid human situation which more often that not is one of borrowed glory intended to conceal the inherent deficiencies. While 'Illusion' draws the gloomy picture of life which, on the face of it, seems to be a blooming career of roses, 'Healing Touch' depicts the poet's craving for the healing touch to his tired and bruised heart. *(Contd. on page 24)*

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ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN A Non-NATIVE CONTEXT

Braj. B. Kachru: THE ALCHEMY OF ENGLISH
Oxford University Press (1989) N. Delhi, p. 200, Rs. 100.

Reviewed by Chandra Bhushan Sharma

The English language in India and other non-native contexts has performed dual and diametrically opposite roles of uniting and dividing people. This language has supported and at the same time brought about the collapse of governments in so many parts of the globe. The same people have opposed its use at one time and then supported its continuance. But when masses take to the streets in doing such things, they are hardly aware of the socio-linguistic consequences of the use of a Western language. These masses are unintelligible to the people from other parts of the multi-lingual nations, but the elites form one linguistic group, by dint of their knowledge of this 'Western' language. This is as true of India as of other one-time colonies. But in the process of continuous use, the western language also adapts itself or gets adapted to the new situation. It is changed, modified and metamorphosed to perform new functions and roles. Discourses and texts deviate partially to substantially from the native variety.

The Alchemy of English provides an insight into such relevant but often ignored issues.

FIELDS OF STUDY

The book attempts to study major areas of English in a non-native context. The issues involved are the naturalization and institutionalization of native and non-native norms in the bilingual's code repertoire. The oft-discussed questions of American and other Englishes, New Englishes and old models in the regional norms have also been taken up. An elaborate study of the bilingual's creativity has also been presented. It is apparent that all the four major areas of (a) Varieties and Functions (b) Models, Norms and Attitudes (c) Impact and Change and (d) Contact Creativity and Discourse Strategies have been covered.

Stray research findings on 'other Englishes' have appeared in journals and dissertations, but this book provides synchronic and diachronic data in terms of time and space. Besides presenting his own research findings spread over a period of three decades in the process of comparing and contrasting, Kachru provides results of research of other linguists. Most of the studies that come to readers' notice are findings of one or two language speakers in a continuous area, but Kachru's study cuts across a wide area and a number of language speakers. The surface level issues associated with the spread of English in Asia and Africa have been studied by a number of researchers, but Kachru's studies. give a new dimension to these issues by associating the 'language question' with the materialistic, social and technological aspects.

NORMS & MODES

Language pedagogues and planners have often raised the question of norms and models or, what we may call, the 'standardization and codification of English' of the second-language speakers. A pragmatic solution to this nagging question has been provided by the author. This question is particularly difficult to approach, because the same language is being used in different contexts by speakers of different languages and value system, with different historical acquisitional and cultural contexts. Certain phonological, lexical or syntactic features would be universal, but at the same time, local and contextual. Norms of English, unlike native language, are governed by native speakers' use, but it also acquires local or imagined or real social norm depending upon the models on television and radio, and the variety used by employers (government or private). Norms of native language are decided by status and corpus planning by government agencies. The question of accent or pronunciation has been dealt with scientifically and in detail. The arguments have been proved with empirical examples, and pragmatic solutions have been suggested.

Eye opening facts regarding the concept of Received Pronunciation have been given. Most of the teachers of English who take every blonde to be an ideal English speaker would be enlightened by the facts and the definition of RP presented in the book.

LANGUAGE OF CHANGE

Another area which has attracted the attention of researchers is of language change. Purists have brooded over infiltration of lexical items and syntactic change, but Kachru provides an insight to possible research areas in cross-cultural and comparative literary studies, which reflects national identity and linguistic distincitveness. As a corollary, he has also taken up the natural consequence of such uses of 'non-native' English for innovations, creativity and emerging literary traditions. In this context, Kachru raises a very pertinent question, whether the models and methods applied for the analysis of monolinguals' discourse and text analysis would be adequate for bilinguals' language use? He has also discussed the thought patterns of bilinguals in creativity process. The discourses types, text design, stylistic conventions and thematic range vary from the major Judiac-Christian traditions. This area of study has been neglected in the non-native English study, but is certainly a major and urgent area which needs attention.

The author has highlighted some major areas of literature produced by multicultural and multilingual speech communities which need to be studied.

Dr. Chandra Bhushan Sharma is Asstt .Professor in English in the Kota Open University, Kota.

(Contd. from page 23)

Thus the poetry of Dr. Nagpal is at once rich and suggestive with a plethora of visionary ideas and ideals, marked by a characteristic simplicity and splendour. It is at once an expression of his agony over the decline of values and a potent call for the reconstruction and the development of values. His philosophical probings lend density to the texture of his verse. More often his poetry tends to become metaphysical which often leads to a seeming obscurity in his verse. Beneath the garb of this apparent obscurity however, can be traced th poet's earnest quest for identity and a desperate struggle for self-actualization.

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THE EARTH—Our Mother

Shriniwas S. Sohoni : HYMN TO THE EARTH—*THE PRITHVI SUKTA*—Transliteration in English *Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd., Delhi (1991) Price Rs. 125*

Introduced by Anima Bose

It has been rightly said that there is a time for everything, a time to sow and a time to reap.

Our time is the time to take another look at this precious Earth of ours, and to think about our relationship with and our obligations to it, recreating that awareness which our ancient thinkers realized in depth and translated that into action with an enlightened understanding that is rare in our time and day.

PRITHVI SUKTA

The *Hymn to the Earth* is the *Prithvi Sukta,* which is in the 12th Chapter of the *Atharva Veda* and consists of 63 verses. The *Atharva Veda* is attributed to Rishi Atharvan who expressed some enlightening thought concerning the Earth, life on this Earth, and needs of human-beings who live on this Earth. Values and high ideals that help intellectual and spiritual progress meant a great deal to the Rishi, who dwelled upon them in depth and with a clarity of understanding germane to one who sees and perceives with refinement. These verses, in a way, integrate the thought expressed some 5,000 years ago in the *Rig*, *Yajur* and *Sama Vedas*, related to Earth and life on this Earth. It is a thing of marvel how thousands of years ago, the seers and rishis were able to envision and elucidate the essence of life and living as these verses do.

MOTHER EARTH

The *Prithvi Sukta* addresses the Earth as the Mother, meditating upon her noble qualities and her benevolence and 'draws the analogy of the relationship between a mother and her children to denote the bond between the Earth and human beings' The sensitivity of the expressions—"May this Earth like a mother nourish me and stimulate my growth" ...or.... "Be kind to us and give us happiness" ....and ..."May this Earth so charged with positive force neutralise that element which impels ill-will"—is compelling. The perceptions expressed in subsequent verses portray the Mother Earth's aspirations, as it were, for her progeny —their well-being, their physical and mental growth, their moral and ethical values. "She is ever willing to sacrifice herself for her children so that an atmosphere of mutual affection, creativity and peace may prevail".

These perceptions of interdependence between Nature and human life, as perceived by the composer of the verses 5,000 years ago, amaze the readers today. I am reminded of Tagore's lines where he says that 'the life stream that runs in the rays of the sun, in the blade of the grass, and in the hopping little sparrow, runs in all human beings' which should create an eternal bond and a deep relationship between nature and human beings, between human life and life *per se*, giving an indelible signature to the imperative of interdependence. It is time "to pluck the strings of the lyre of our languid hearts", as Togore says, and "to stain the strains of music in our hearts with the scarlet symphony of Mother Earth".

MESSAGE OF HARMONY & PEACE

The *Prithvi Sukta* also brings out the synthesis, the harmony and peace that passeth all understanding as the Earth exemplifies by baring the varieties, the diversity and the pluralism as found in those who live on this Earth, specially the humankind. Isn't it a pity that the human beings try to overlord this Earth progressively, wound and desecrate her unashamedly ?

These verses of the *Prithvi Sukta* present to us very powerfully the creative thinking and the intensity of the Rishi's understanding of the Earth's elemental force of truth, sacrifice, renuciation and creative energy which, in essence, is the symbol of all existence, the basis of all "Good Society" peopled by human beings, reflecting the ethos of tolerance, compassion, togetherness and peace. Not PASSIVITY but PEACE as an active quest for harmony within and without, by "living" and letting "to live".

THE WORLD—A FAMILY BEYOND "MINE" AND "THINE

The concept of "the Earth Citizen" was innate in India's ancient thought. The Indian seers envisioned the whole world as one family. Not by magic, or like the banality this phrase "One World" has been reduced to by routine quotation of "*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*". Clearly the ancient vision was based on the philosophy that the whole world is a family to the noble-minded, while to the petty-minded, there is a host of distinctions of "mine" and "thine". It seems to me this petty-mindedness has led to the emergence of such strange and really meaningless terminologies such as the First, Second and Third Worlds in our time and day.

As one reads the *Hymn to the Earth,* one is struck by the forcefulness of the words and the enlightenment that flows from these thoughts. It shows the acute perception that "life" and "living" have an exalting purpose, and not what our time and day have turned

(*Overleaf*)

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FABLES OF A WAY-FARER

P. Raja : TALES OF MULLA NASRUDDIN

B.R Publishing Corporation (Delhi) price Rs. 120.

Comments by Ranbir Sinh

If there is one such character acclaimed by various nations as their own, and who has attained an envious position in their literature, he is undoubtedly Mulla or Khoja Nasruddin. Who was he? From where did he come?—such questions are often asked. He is known by different names in different countries : *Afanti, Avanti, Atenti, Apanti, Joha, Mulla or Maulana Do Piaza* in India, and of course, Nasruddin.

A STATUE IN BOKHARA

In Bokhara, there is his statue, riding his famous donkey. Right in front of it, is the lake in which it is said that he saved Jafar, the money-lender, from drowning.

By popular belief, he was a citizen of Bokhara. But the Amir of Bokhara did not like the pungent and satirical thoughts of Nasruddin. Such thoughts, from ancient times to the present-day, have not been appreciated by those who have been in power. Every effort is made to suppress or kill them. Either by killing the man, by persecuting him and killing his spirit, or by the modern weapon of censorship. The Amir persecuted him so much that Nasruddin was forced to leave Bokhara, and live in the city of Baghdad for more than ten years.

RETURN OF THE EXILED PHILOSOPHER

When he re-visited his old home, Bokhara, accompanied by his faithful companion, the Donkey, the Amir of Bokhara was surprised to hear the news of his arrival. "How could this happen ?" he exclaimed. He was informed by the Khalifa of Baghdad that Nasruddin had been beheaded. The Sultans of Turkey and Iran had informed him that Nasruddin was hanged. "Go and find out, who is this man ?" ordered the Amir.

But why was there such a commotion on his arrival ? Why was the Amir, his Vazir, the money-lenders, and other courtiers afraid of this lone, harmless man accompanied with no one but his donkey. It was because of his thoughts, which propagated the humane philosophy that the inhabitants of this world, irrespective of caste, creed, and colour, should live as brothers. He advocated a society in which everyone helped each other, at all given times, and under all circumstances. He wished and pleaded for a society which should be free from greed, jealousy, anger and deception.

HIS STORIES

Through his stories, he made comments on every social evil such as corruption, religious fraud, subjugation and exploitation of the poor, against blind faith etc. Nasruddin was an unique personality who could bring about a social revolution, a revolution in the minds of humans by telling stories.

His stories have two very distinct aspects. One which is pungent, pointed and sharp, for those who exploit the society, such as the Amir, his Vazir and courtiers, money-lenders, religious leaders, and muscle-men. The other aspect is that of preaching and showing the path of righteousness to those people who are peace-loving and honest. His thoughts remain relevant even today because unfortunately, humankind has not changed much over the centuries. And, therefore, his stories are also relevant and thus quite popular.

Mulla Nasruddin's stories have been told and retold over the centuries. The Soviet Union has made a film based on his stories, as told by Leonid Solovayiev. In China, his stories have been published under the name of *Afanti*; a cartoon film and a feature film have also been made. Recently in India also, a T.V. serial, based on *Dastan-e-Nasruddin* has been made, which is awaiting release.

P. Raja has collected some of the stories of Mulla Nasruddin, for children of all ages. He has not disclosed the source from where he has taken these stories. It is indeed a difficult task to 'cast' his stories for children There is a grave danger of their losing the satire, the punch, and the bite, by making certain alterations and additions. And unfortunately, P. Raja has been a victim of this. Most of the stories are without the powerful wit and satire of Mulla Nasruddin.

Author and playwright, and for long associated with the theatre world, especially through IPTA, Shri Ranbir Sinh has also featured in the T. V. serial on Mulla Nasruddin.

THE EARTH—Our Mother (*Contd.*)

life and loving into -- a state of self-aggrendisement, mindless violence and utter disharmony.

SENSITIVE INTERPRETATIONS

This transliteration of the *Prithvi Sukta* with the English title *Hymn to the Earth* is not just an English translation from Sanskrit, but the text has been enriched by sensitive interpretations in a language of embracement by Shri Shrinivas S. Sohoni, acknowledging the unexpected happiness he derived from undertaking the work. It is a good thing that once again, the members of India's civil service are turning to letters and producing works on culture, art and philosophy.

One hopes that this book will be read widely, and specially by the younger generation so that they may learn more and more about their own rich heritage to perceive what, in truth, they have inherited.

Prof. Anima Bose, Director, Centre for Peace Education, Delhi, was invited to speak on the HYMN TO THE EARTH, when Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, Vice President of India released the book in May, 1991.

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LIFE IN BETWEEN

P. Raja : FROM ZERO TO INFINITY

All India Books, P. O. Sri Aurobindo Ashram, distributed by Vak, 3-Jawaharlal Nehru St., Pondicherry (1987)

pp. 74+12.

Review by D. Gnanasekaran

P. Raja is not a stranger to Indo-Anglian literature. He is a poet, translator, critic and fiction writer. As a poet, he is abundantly sensitive, imaginative, amusingly ironical and basically humanitarian.

BETWEEN BIRTH & DEATH

Birth is a 'by-product', usually of a willing amalgamation of fertile feelings and death is an inescapable 'end-product' of life on earth. Life in between is full of unexpected twists and agonizing conflicts. One is born out of zero, gains a temporary sojourn on earth, and ultimately merges into the infinite vastness. P. Raja's collection of 52 poems revolves on this eternal theme. It is a document of his tragic-comic reactions to the riddles "of the havocs in life/after the release" from maternal confinement. It is also an attempt to delineate in verse form, agonies of the inner voyage through a language of powerful and picturesque imagery.

'The Birth of a Poem' is a sort of "copulation of an incident/accident/occasion/with five senses/of a fertile poet". The poet, like the mother, enjoys unaccountable bliss "to see the poem trotting the globe/ with the umblical cord uncut forever". He knows for certain that 'The Real Mystery' is "What happens between Birth and Death".

GLIMPSES

His glimpses of India are vivid and arresting photographic stills The 'Common Dawn' in the native semi-urban locality gets immortalized through an uncommon poetic treatment. It is a montage of a few scenarios presenting a wholesome picture of the dawn Words like '*kumkum*' and '*kolam*' lend Indianness to the poem, and demand a different cultural competence from a foreign reader.

P. Raja, like most other creative writers, simply resorts to 'borrowing', in order to find words for culturally bound every-day object and ideas. It is a linguistic experimentation, though not new. He borrows words from regional languages, especially Tamil, and uses them for some effect, not for their own sake but to give a realistic touch to his poetic description. These borrowed lexical items in his poems evoke the cultural ethos and create the climate of old traditions and religious values of Indian life.

A WALKING CORPSE OR A CHARMING PUPPET

'The Wonders of a Woman' is a sad comment on the inescapable downward glide of feminine physiological graph. The language is apt and striking; the poet employs words with absolute control, authority and originality. The poem 'Daughter of Joy' is crisp, effective and chilling as well. She is "A rebel in the 'chaste' society". Every dog (bitch) has its day. She is the society's physical drainage and all animal passions are drained here for a nominal fee. She is "A walking corpse/Yet a charming puppet/amidst carrion crows".

NOT TO LET PEOPLE THINK

'The Godmaker' is packed with irony and the irony of the Hindu religion is not to let people think but "to burn all those who think". 'Curtain Lecture' is an illustrative example in a finely modulated diction of the deteriorating humanism and tolerance among mankind. Everything is commercialized and the social traffic is no awkwardly congested that we get lost and feel orphaned without any roots and props.

ADAM & EVE AND OTHER SUB-THEMES

The four-lined 'Adam/Eve Teasing' is a 'flicker' poem, to borrow the American label. Man in isolation is docile and unprovoked like a woman in isolation. Only in collective strength, men are masculine, and women in a group tend to be equally masculine The poet subtly and sweetly exposes the inherent tendencies of both sexes with a satirical tinge Scientific advancement attempts to dismiss superstitions, and so how ridiculous it is for woman to remain sterile today : "Let me have/a test tube/a scientist and my man/O ! I am fertile !" It is humorous and a pointer to our increasing surrender to emotionless science. 'To the Lonely Grey Hair' is a delightful imaginative output and the poet is at his best when he laments : "Who bribed you, O hair/to change your colour ?" Another equally delightful poem is 'The Rickshaw', "the hooded cobra on wheels". The poet is nostalgic and also futuristic in poems like 'My Grandpa's Desk'.

WE INDIANS . . .

Sarcasm at its best is revealed by the poem 'We Indians'. We are eternally preoccupied with life before birth and life after death, but

> **Do not ask us what about**
> **life between birth and death**
> **we have no time for all that.**
> **And you don't need an Indian**
> **to answer such a simple question.**

The poet uses metaphors drawn mainly from our every-day life. They drive home his pragmatic and philosophic messages as sure as death The poet's first collection promises a good beginning and augurs well a better progress of his poetic sensibility,

Shri D. Gnanasekaran is a senior lecturer in English, Tagore Arts College, Pondicherry.

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BHARAT—A KAVYA BHOOMI

M.S. Kushwaha
INDIAN POETICS AND WESTERN THOUGHT
Agro Publishing House, Lucknow (1988) 266 pp.

Review by S. C. Dwivedi

The book, *Indian Poetics and Western Thought*, is carefully organised to study the importance and relevance of Indian poetics so as to relate it to the mainstream of modern critical thinking. It is addressed to English and Sanskrit scholars as a whole. Though there is no plan to make any comparative analysis between Indian poetics and western thought, here and there we come across such comparative analysis. Its author, Prof. M S. Kushwaha is a well-known a scholar of English as well as Sanskrit.

It has been a habit with Indian scholars to depend entirely on western schools of criticism. In the words of Professor V.K. Gokak, our research work is "hardly anything more than a collection of available critical data and contributions not to knowledge, but to a whole heap of type-scripts piled up in a university library". This persuades us to ask one question: whether we do have any Indian school of literary criticism ? Professor Kushwaha has taken a great deal of care to answer this question by selecting certain scholarly articles and making them into a unifying whole.

The book is divided into three sections, each rich and varied in its contents.

FIRST SECTION : SOME POETICS

K.R S. Iyengar's "Indian Poetics and Western Aesthetics : Some Reflections" aims to establish *Bharat* as a *Kavya-bhumi*. He succeeds in persuading us to scrutinise Shakespeare, Spenser, Shaw, Eliot and O'Neill in the light of *Natyasastra* and *Dhvanyaloka*.

K.A. Paniker's "Indian Poetics and Western Literary Criticism : A Comparative Study" makes a comparative study of the writings starting from Plato and Aristotle and the writings starting from Bharat's *Natyasastra*. This study helps to trace out three relationships : parallelism, complementary differences and contradictory divergences.

V.N. Dhavale's "Indian Poetics and Modern Hermeneutics" lays stress on interpretation; but more emphasis goes on to grammar, syntax and phonetics. In this regard, Prof. Dhavale discusses the insight of Panini, Paatanjali, Bhartrhari, Kumarila and others, as against discourse analysis, socio-linguistics and psycho-linguistics.

P.S. Sastri's ' Indian Poetics and New Criticism : A Study in Attitudes" casts light on poetic language and uniqueness of a poem as it has been prominently dealt with in New Criticism. He also speaks of the ancient Indian critics who laid stress on metaphor, irony, paradox and discussed the true poetic quality of a poem.

The first section concludes with V.Y. Kantak's "Bharata and the Western Concept of Drama". Here, there has been a comparative study of Bharat's *Natyasastra* and Aristotle's *Poetics*.

THEORIES OF POETICS

The second section deals with major theories of Indian poetics. It begins with Krishna Rayan's "*Rasa-Dhvani* and present-day Literary Theory and Criticism". *Rasa-Dhvani* theory has been described here as a theory of literary meaning. Modern writing is distinguished by its exclusive dependence on the strategies of suggestion.

V.K. Chari, in his "*Rasa* as a General Theory of Poetry", tries to provide an integrated concept of *rasa* as a "comprehensive and convincing account of poetic semantics and a consistent general theory of poetry".

A C. Sukla's "T.S. Eliot and the Theory of *Rasa*" aims to study "Eliot's theory of impersonality of art in the light of Indian doctrine of *Rasa*". According to Prof. Sukla, the latter is more satisfactory explanation of artistic creation.

V.K. Gokak's "The Concept of *Riti-Guna* and the Idea of Steel" is a scholarly article which warns us against the use of the so-called poetic words, and lays stress on its technical and stylistic aspects.

R.S. Pathak's "*Vakrokti* and the Language of Poetry" deals with eccentric expression and poetic diction. V. Venkata Subbaiah's "*Vakrokti* and Models of Deviation" discusses the problems that would arise if eccentric expression and deviations from the accepted norms of language are not controlled beyond certain limits.

Kapil Kapoor's "The Concept of *Alamkara* and the Theory of Metaphor" deals with yet another theory of Indian poetics.

G.B M. Thampi's "The Doctrine of *Sadharnikarana* and Some Western Aesthetic Theories" describes the concept of *sadharnikarana* and about its evolution as a by-product of Bhattnayaka's discussion of the differentia of the poetic use of *language*. There has been a comparative study with Western aesthetics.

Prof. Kushwaha's "*Auchitya* or the Concept of Propriety" concludes the second section. The study of the concept of propriety discusses how unique opportunity is provided for theoreticians to look into similarities as well as dissimilarities between Indian and Western poetics.

INDIAN POETICS & WESTERN LITERATURE

The third section consists of two essays which discuss the applicability of Indian poetics to Western literature. In "Indian Poetics and Western Literature", Sisir Kumar Ghose accepts the fact that the present topic needs years of research work. Referring to several trends in Indian poetic theories Prof. Ghose advises us to march toward a creative future with caution, courage and confidence.

(Continued on next page)

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Tender Feelings : Poetic Thoughts

C. A. Rebeiro : SONNETS FOR MOLINA
Writers' Workshop, Calcutta (1988) Pp. 29 Rs. 40/-

Review by Bina Asthana

"*Sonnets for Molina*", a first volume of verse by C. A. Reberio is a recent (1988) publication of the Writers' Workshop, Calcutta. Cyril Antony Rabeiro, a Jesuit priest, had the opportunity to go to Phillipines to take an M.A. in Psychology. As the prefatory remarks reveal, "It was then that he made a review of the course and meaning of his experiences then".

A SONNET SEQUENCE OF LOVE THEME

The book is a collection of twenty one poems in the poetic form of sonnets addressed to Molina, affectionately called 'Luz. She is a source of his inspiration, the realization of a dream, an emotion in poetic form. The collection is actually a Sonnet-Sequence, a series of love poems addressed to the dream-figure. Through these sonnets, the poet explores and analyzes his feelings and experiences regarding the object of his love. The sonnets are intrinsically linked to each other, with an underlying love theme. The gradual development of the feeling, leading to its anti-climax, constitutes the implicit plot of the sonnet cycle.

The emotional feelings and thoughts are explicit. In the poem "*From Love Apart*", the poet remembers the "lonely trek" of his life; but also recognizes the danger of encroachment of love from without. Yet the hope is that he will end this "lonely trek, from Love apart."

A platonic impulse pervades through the poems. Love is not just an "outer person". The yearning is to "gift the tenderness", and not to take anything away. The lover is devoted like the Arab who turns towards Mecca five times a day — in '*My Pligrim Heart*'. Romantic associations mark the sonnet sequence.

BE STILL ! BE STILL ! FOR THOU ART SOLD !

A change of mood takes place in the fifteenth sonnet "*Unsettling Echoes*", when the lover finds 'himself a "closed cocoon". In the "*Toppled Towers*", the "citadel has crumbled to the ground". But no jealousy arises, even when he sees on her finger, "Another's claim to courtship" (*Nuclear Furnace*) The lover has not forgotten that "Self-pledged am I to hold a chalice wine", and so the ultimate reminder to his heart is to "Be still, be still ! For thou must not forget that thou art sold".

NEO - SYMBOLISM

The poems belonging to the Neo-Symbolist groud have sublimity, and the theme comes out most explicit ly Platonism of Shelley is combined with idealism, intrinsicaily attached to the norm of his life. The internal world of dreams and memories is reflected, while the poet is weighing the significance or insignificance of the new emotional turn in his life The poetry is subjective as the poet finds his inspiration and his subjects in his own thoughts and feelings.

Regarding the artistic and technical features, the poems are 14-line sonnets, written in the Petrarchan style. There is one thought in octave and a turn in sestat which varies and completes it. Iambic pentameter with 10 syllables in each line is characteristically found in it.

The poetic diction is strong or tender. The use and combination of words is original and imaginative. The language is subtle and suggestive. It is poe'ry for its own sake and appeals directly to the poet in us.

Mrs. Bina Asthana teaches in the Deptt. of English, Govt. College, Nasirabad. (Rajasthan)

[We have been informed that the priest-poet C. A. Rebeiro is no more ! May he rest in peace !—Ed.]

BHARAT—A KAVYA BHUMI (Contd.)

In the concluding essay, "*Hamlet* in the Light of Indian Poetics", S.C. Sengupta applies Indian theory of *rasa-dhvani* to Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. It has been a remarkable application of Indian poetics to western literature.

The book, as a whole, succeeds in opening a new era before all the promising Indian scholars to realise the validity and vitality of our literary theory, and then to apply it to Indian and Western literature. This book proves the ground for a happy and profitable meeting between the Eastern and the Western critical theories and theorists, and stands as a bridge between the two parallel traditions. Though east is east and west is west, yet they can meet in their study and critical examination of literatures. That is what Prof. Kushwaha actually plans and achieves in this book. What he has done is both valid and reliable. He has vindicated the universality of Sanskrit poetics by applying it to the study of modern critics.

The book inspires the readers to develop a genuine critical language, idiom and tool to evaluate works of literature without being largely derivative, imitative and unIndian. It carries with it the flavour and fragrance of Indian soil.

It is time to look into our hearts, and evaluate our literature and other literatures of the world as self-respecting Indian scholars. We have copied the West a great deal and should learn to call a spade a spade. This book takes us to a point where the whole world appears as a global village, yet our rich Indian critical heritage is not forgotten. Prof. Kushwaha wants us to develop our own *swanubhava* in both creative and critical writings and avoid *paranivritti*.

The publisher and the contributors who have joined Prof. Kushwaha in this great adventure of heart and mind among masterpieces also deserve hearty congratulations.

Prof. Suresh Chandra Dwivedi is in the Deptt. of English, University of Allahabad, Allahabad.

[*It is regretted that the review could not be published earlier—Eds.*]

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REFLECTIONS ON LIFE

Ramesh Chandra Dhall

TWO KILOS OF RICE AND OTHER STORIES

Writers' Workshop, Calcutta (1989). p. 100; Flexiback Rs 60/-, Hardback Rs 80/-.

Reviewed by Pankaj Singh

The thirteen stories of Mr. Ramesh Chandra Dhall collected under the title *Two Kilos of Rice and Other Stories* could be broadly divided into two groups : one focusing on the social life, particularly the corruption in politics and government administration, and the other reflecting on the implication of common happenings around.

ABOUT SOCIAL & POLITICAL LIFE AROUND

Stories like "Sacrifice" and "Mohini Kaka" deal with corruption and ruthless manipulations in the political world, while "Beware of Dogs" and 'Broiler" deal with the predicament of junior officers in the administrative set-up. To please the bosses, the young officials may have to play subordinates to their wives, and even to their dogs,or indulge in corruption supplying them free broilers and eggs entering these as dead or broken in official record "Beware of Dogs" could have been a hilarious comedy full of irony and humour, had it been handled more wittily. At various other places also, one misses the humour which the situation warrants. One doen't know whether it was there in the original and was lost in translation or whether the author has generally missed the sting and humour that should go with satires on corruption in society.

In this group, the story which has come out best is the title story "Two Kilos of Rice". The corruption of the rich and mighty Madhab Patnaik, who steals from the rice sent by government for flood victims, is very suggestively juxtaposed with the innocence, simplicity and honesty of the poor labourer, Pandiya. Pandiya comes to donate for flood victims the two kilos of rice which are forced on him by his corrupt master Madhab Patnaik who made Pandiya, his employee, open and restitch the rice bags to steal rice.

POIGNANT REFLECTIONS ON LIFE

The stories which end on a note of reflection are relatively engrossing. "Twilight", for example, is a poignant story which reveals how all glory falls under time's bending sickle. The one time strong, revered, held-in-awe personality of Bar-at-Law from London, Bohubalendra Babu is reduced to a decrepit, helpless, ailing old man : "Nothing but an irony of fate—that reputed hunter of yester-years could not drive away even a pestering fly from his own face now" (*p. 21*). The plight of his senior makes the narrator Prabhanjan ponder whether it won't be better to die young : "Wasn't it far better to cease all of a sudden when the limbs were strong enough ? When everything all around was in perfect shape and sight ?" (*p. 22*). And the blessing of his senior for him to have a long life makes Prabhanjan reflect, "But was that a blessing, or a curse in disguise during the twilight of life ?" (*p. 22*).

"Visiting the Lord" juxtaposes the scepticism of the narrator who is right in front of the idol of Lord Jagannath, with the faith, bliss and peace experienced by the young American from California who is outside the temple and says his prayers near the Sun Pillar Religion and worship after all are a matter of faith.

"Rahim's Will" has a little unusual subject. Rahim the meat seller has a surprising devotion to Hanumanji. After he is dead, it is found mentioned in his will that from a portion of his savings, a temple for Lord Hanuman should be constructed, and from the interest on the remaining savings, an annual fair should be organised in the honour of Hanumanji. When communal violence is one of the biggest threats to our country, 'Rahim's Will' can be an eye-opener, as it reveals that in common man's mind, religions are not so stringently and inimically compartmentalised as they are made to appear by the politicians.

"The Familiar Face" again erds on a pensive querry, "Do sheer economic difficulties wipe out humane qualities so completely ?" (*p. 42*). Rao, the honest, hardworking and poor tailor, heaves a sigh of relief when his mother-in-law dies, as he was finding it difficult to feed an additional mouth with his meagre income.

The narratives, in general, remain bland reporting, which fails to evoke a feeling or a mood. However, it is the somewhat philosophical reflective quality towards the end of some stories which redeems them.

Dr. (Mrs.) Pankaj Singh is Assistant Professor, Deptt. of English, Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla-171 005.

MY CAT —A Poem by **Anna Alexander**
(Thiruvalla-Kerala)

He sits immobile
Like the Sphinx of Egypt,
His big, black-rimmed eyes
Shining brightly in the night
Like flames in sooty lamps.

His fur is as soft
As the down of a chick
And his movements as graceful
As those af a cheetah.
His supple body leaps like fire
To catch an insect on the wall.

In the darkness,
When everyone is asleep,
And I lie awake in gloom and despair,
He snuggles by my side consolingly,
Curls up,
And drops into a slumber.

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EDUCATION IN INDIA : ONE MORE REPORT

J. C. Aggrawal : RAMAMURTI REPORT (1990) on National Policy on Education in India

Doaba House, Delhi pp. 144, Price Rs 120/-

Comments byG BK. Hooja

While opinions may differ on the various recommendations made by the Ramamurti Committee, there is no doubt that for some time to come, its report shall be referred to by experts and practitioners of education, even as the *National Policy on Education*, (1986), *Kothari Report* (1966) as well as *Radhakrishanan Report* (1948) have been cited during the past several years. (But it may be added, in parenthesis, that this would need a free accessibility of the report. As it is, the present reviewer had to go to the Director-General of National Literacy Mission to obtain a copy).

Soon after the final report was published, the reviewer had the opportunity of being present at a symposium organised by the Academic Staff College of Rajasthan University. Present at this symposium was Dr. M.G. Bhatawadekar, a member of the Acharya Ramamurti Committee. He had with him a copy of the report, and when asked if the reviewer could have it, the extra-cautions reply was that it had not yet been released for public scrutiny, although the press reports said that it had been presented to the Parliament.

My purpose in referring to this episode is to make the point that our criteria of "classification" should be liberalized, and further that this report should be made freely available and widely circulated not only amongst the teaching community, but also among the students and their parents, as they are respectively the producers/consumers of education, and among others who are interested in the educational problems besetting India, at the threshold of the 21st century. The document should be available not only in English, but also in the other national languages of India. It should be discussed thread-bare in various fora, so that the millions of teachers who form the "delivery-line" of the educational system and others who fall in the category of 'policy-makers', *viz*, the politicians, aducationists, bureaucrats and the media-persons reorganize their thinking in the light of the wisdom contained in this report.

* * *

From this point of view, J.C. Aggarwal, has done a singular service. As he points out, the book under review is indended to serve as a handy source of information for the cross section of population interested in revamping the educational system in India.

THE BACKGROUND

The books has 12 chapters Chapter one provides an overview of the growth of the educational system through the ages; constitutional provisions; educational expansion and periodical reforms; and the reports of various commissions and committees which have deliberated on educational issues from time to time. Chapter two includes the main directions contained in the NPE and their implementation. Chapter three throws light on the working of the Committee for Review of NPE. The next chapter incorporates the main observations and recommendations of Committee.

Chapters five to eleven summarise the Committee's recommendations with regard to various levels and stages of education. These chapters also portray the present scenario by giving useful educational statistics.

The last chapter is devoted to the evaluation of the report and seeks to discover suitable strategies for carrying out such educational reforms in India. This chapter also incorporates an analysis of issues like financial aspects, determination of priorities, school and industry linkages, vocationalisation of secondary education, "mandalization" of Navodaya Vidyalayas, and 'educationalisation' of educational administration. Press and public views on education also feature in this chapter.

All in all, the book under review offers a good resume of the intent and purpose of the Ramamurti Committee Report and the author's own, fairly well-conceived analysis.

In this short comment, one cannot go into the merits or demerits of the report and its several recommendation which need to be carefully examined and deliberated upon One hopes that this book and its successors would initiate the process.

THE REPORT—SOME PLUS & MINUS POINTS

The author's observations on the various recommendations of the Ramamurti Committee Report are thought-provoking and tinged with realism. Says the author, "The report of the Committee, notwithstanding its scholarly treatment and 18 excellent essays, fails to generate strong optimism that it will be implemented successfully, for it has not suggested any time-bound programme, based on the availability of funds. It should have given clear-cut targets to be achieved in a time-bound frame-work, which the Central and State educational planners and administrators could monitor factually; otherwise, this is the first exhaustive document after the Kothari Report of 1964-66".

On the first impulse, one is inclined to agree with the author that the upshot of this excercise is that we have yet another well written document, but not a plan of action It cannot be gainsaid that unless appropriate action follows this report, it will remain yet another excercise in futility.

(Cantd.)

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Education In India :

One More Report

However, viewed in perspective, can we blame the Committee for this lack? The circumstances in which the Committee was formed and has presented its report are well-known. Within the constraints in which it worked, the Committee has done its best. It has presented a blue-print for an educational system which may well lead the nation towards the growth of an enlightened and humane society. It is now for those who hold the levers of power in their hands to deliver the goods.

NEED FOR LOCAL ACTION

To borrow the environmental slogan, 'they must think globally, nationally; but act locally.' While broad national goals should not be lost sight of, action has necessarily to be taken at the micro level. Therefore, plans of action should be worked out at the local level, keeping in view the local needs and available resources, so that education does not remain a barren channel, leading to nowhere, and there is no mismatch between demand and supply.

This brings to the fore the need and urgency of the early establishment of "District Governments" and Panchayati Raj at the district/village levels *a la* County Governments in the USA and UK, so that the local bureaucracy functions under the supervision and guidance of the local representative leadership, and a proper system of checks and balances is established. In order that the local leadership remains accountable to the People who are, in ultimate analysis, the sovereign authority and also the consumers of the educational system, it is essential that elections to the P.R. bodies should take place at stipulated intervals. It could then be left to District/Village Governments hopefully, to look after the educational complexes,as adumbrated by the Ramamurti Committee.

UNIVERSITIES & U.G.C.

Sure enough, in this process, the Universities have also to play a significant role by providing examplary leadership and extension services, so that the high school system receives constant and continuous nourishment from senior academicians and experts.

The UGC is keen to grant autonomous status to as many colleges as possible, but intertia and diffidence have stood in the way of the colleges/teachers to grasp the opportunity. It is time that they seized the reins of the system boldly in their own hands, and stopped grumbling any more about lack of authority.

An enlightened and humane society can be built only on the foundation of participatory self government based on liberal, democratic and vibrant institutions.

Shri G.B. Kumar Hooja, a seasoned administrator/ educationist is a former V.C. of Gurukul Kangri Viswavidyrlaya, Haridwar (U.P.)

A POSITIVE RESPONSE

Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths & Helen Tiffin
THE EMPIRE WRITES BACK
Routledge, London-New York, 1990

Review by Ashok Mahajan

(Excerpt of a Broadcast on 10th Jan., '91 at 9 30 p.m. on the National Channel of All India Radio, New Delhi, in the programme, **'Talking About Books'**).

The book discusses theory and practice of post-colonial literatures produced in English in the Commonwealth. It specifically deals with African countries, Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, the Caribbean, India, Malaysia, Malta, New Zealand, Pakistan, Singapore, South Pacific Isles and Srilanka Firstly, it sets to identify the range and nature of these post-colonial texts and then attempts to describe the various theories which have emerged so far to account for them.

The work is published under the general editorship of Terence Hawkes—editor of a series titled *'New Accents'*. The series is concerned with expounding and commenting upon new concepts of literary forms and modes; new notions of the nature of literature, that is, structuralism, semiotics etc.; and new views of literature's role in different societies. The reference to the Empire in the title denotes a collective term for countries once ruled by Britain, while Britain itself is alluded to as the Centre.

ENGLISH UNDER THE EMPIRE & POST-COLONIAL

While introducing the subject, the authors point out that the study of English within the Empire has always been a densely political and cultural phenomenon. British colonial administrators in India, provoked by the missionaries on the one hand and fears of native insubordination on the other, discovered an ally in English literature to support them in maintaining control of the natives under the guise of a liberal education. After independence, India, like other post-colonial societies, sought to establish its difference from Britain.

The post-colonial literatures developed through several stages—of national and regional consciousness. The authors admit that the former British critics, victims of old prejudices, applied English critical canons of the Received-Standard English. They viewed colonial works in English as isolated national offshoots of English literature, and relegated them generally to marginal and subordinate positions. However, when they discovered some text which they approved of, they claimed it as part of British literature and not colonial literature.

The compulsion for new Englishes in the colonies may be traced to several reasons :

(a) Imperialism results in a profound linguistic alienation.

(Contd.)

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(b) Codes of English and its vocabulary were felt to be inadequate or inappropriate to describe the fauna, the physical and geographical conditions or the cultural practices they have developed in their own lands.

(c) The 'englishes' they develop will enable them to express their sense of *Otherness*—distinct from what they would appear if they wrote in English.

MARGINALITY AS SOURCE OF CREATIVITY

The authors ascertain that in pushing the colonial world to the margins of experience, the Centre i.e. Britain, pushed consciousness beyond the point at which monocentrism could be accepted without question. In other words, the alienating process which initially served to relegate the post-colonial world to the 'margin', turned upon itself, and acted to push that world out of a kind of a mental barrier, into a position from which all experience could be viewed as uncentred and pluralistic. Marginality thus became an unprecedented source of creative energy. These notions are implicit in the post-colonial texts cited in the book.

TWO STAGES OF POST-COLONIAL WRITING

It is further explained that there are two stages by which post-colonial writing defines itself—first by *abrogation* or denial of the privelege of English, the language of the Centre; the second, by *appropriation* and reconstruction of this language. Abrogation is a refusal of the categories of the imperial culture, its aesthetic, its illusory standard of normative or 'correct' usage and its assumption of a traditional and fixed meaning 'inscribed' in the words. Appropriation is the process by which the language is taken and made to bear the burden of one's own cultural experience.

Colonies are classified in the book as *monoglossic* i.e. single-language societies using English as a native tongue-e.g settler colonies like Australia, New Zealand and America; *diglossic*, like Canada; and *polyglossic*, like India, Africa and Caribbean countries.

Post-colonial writing abrogates the privileged centrality of English by using language to signify difference while employing a sameness which allows it to be understood. This it does by adoption of various textual strategies such as glossing, use of untranslated words, syntactic fusion, code-switching and vernacular transcription.

A PERSISTENT PREJUDICE

One of the most persistent prejudices underlying the production of the Centre's texts is that only certain categories of experience are capable of being rendered as 'literatures'. This privileging of particular types of experience denies access to the world for the writer subject to a dominating colonial culture. It works in a complicated and reciprocal way, both denying value to the post-colonial experience itself, as 'unworthy of literature' and preventing post-colonial texts from engaging with that experience. The result is that the post-colonial writer is consigned to a world of mimicry and imitation, since he is forced to write about material which lies at one remove from the significant experiences of the post-colonial world. Naipaul's *The Mimic Men* is an illustration of such a theory.

THEORIES & THEMES OF COLONIAL SOCIETIES

The authors also dwell on the literary theories of the colonial societies. On India, they go on to say that if Indian criticism has to be valid, then it must shape itself on Sanskrit critical theories of Bhamah and Anandvardhana relating to *Rasa*, *Dhvani* and *Alankaras*. I fully endorse their views in this regard. The African literary theories, on the other hand, have been crystallised on the concept of Negritude. In the settler countries, the emphasis has been on the themes peculiar to each.

DECOLONISATION

The authors' conclusion is rather forceful and unambiguous. They assert that the concept of standard English has been exploded; the Centre's canon has been driven to the periphery in the paradigm of international English studies; and a decentering has taken place. The process of literary decolonisation has involved a radical dismantling of the European codes. The equation may change further in future. The Empire may no longer read what the Centre writes; for it'll be the Centre which'll read what the Empire writes henceforth, and that too in the Empire's own language appropriated from the Centre.

(Retired Lt Col.) Mr. Ashok Mahajan is a well known poet and literary critic.

REFLECTIONS ON MY BALL-PEN

D. Gnanasekaran

You're my friend and foe;
Blunt edged, but mightier than the sword.
You set the ball rolling,
Many a head rolls or more ranks swell.
Too small and always tight-lipped,
Feigning innocence of the consequences,
You see the fall of a man or a change of rule.
And so you have a universal sway.

I enjoy a smooth riding on your back
while my thoughts go black and white.
On an unguarded moment once
You gave me a slip and down fell on your head;
Perhaps you suffered a stroke
And lapsed into a prolonged coma.

On an impulse I get up now and
At once I must empty my mind,
Or I'll go mad, I say.
Alas ! You're dead and there's no flow of life.
The virgin whiteness on your contact
Turns ungrateful to the tiller's care.

Out I throw you and there you lie
Buried under a crumpled mound;
On second thoughts, I regret my rashness.
How ungrateful am I to You,
No doubt, I'm a human being.

Poet D. Gnanasekaran is Senior Lecturer in Tagore Arts College, Pondicherry.

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DIRTY WORDS & ABSURD IMAGES

The Biggest Little Problem Facing America Today—A Note by K. S. Duggal

The USA is in the grip of a none-too unexpected controversy. It relates to homo-erotic art, sadomasochistic performances and dirty words, clumsy concepts and absurd images in literary writing. These are said to be damaging the young psyche by communicating dangerous messages as for instance, a woman is 'a sexual convenience, an object to serve and service man', ..'violence is an effective means of resolving conflicts', and the like.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR ARTS & THE PERMISSIVE SOCIETY

The immediate provocation was the reauthorisation and funding bill of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). A highly well-organised vocal ultra-conservative lobby was pledged to get the NEA abolished.

A permissive society, American writers, artists and performers, at times seem to go to unpremissive limits. A New York artist Andres Serrano has a picture showing a plastic crucifix submerged in unine. A collage by David Wojnarowicz depicts Jesus Christ as a drug addict with a syringe in his arm. A homo-erotic image of Robert Mapplethorpe shows a man urinating into the mouth of another mau.

And National Endowment of Arts (NEA) has subsidised exhibitions of all these artists.

In *Tempa Bay Times* recently, Walt Belcher, their television commentator talked about images of the absurd culled from Stern Wright, a man whose mind seems as rumpled as the clothes he is said to wear. Some specimens :

"I have a microwave fire place, you can spend an entire evening by the fire in eight minutes.

"I hate it when my foot falls asleep—that means it will be up all night.

"I bought some powdered water but I didn't know what to add.

"I saw a restaurant that served breakfast any time. I went in and ordered French toast from the Rennaisance.". . . . . .

Karen Finley, a New York—based performance artist who is riding the crest of popularity, noticed the other day in *Time Weekly*, indulges in "ranting profanity, unspeakable desires, sexual politics, assuming the character of a rapist she acts out the darkest imaginings of man". Her old grandmother happened to see her performance and wrote to tell her that she was talented but toilet-mouthed.

RAW LANGUAGE — ORDER OF THE DAY & NEW SOCIAL MORES

It is a society where three decades ago, *Lady Chatterlay's Lover* and *Tropic of Cancer* breaking censorship barriers hit the best seller's list. As a result, raw language, with very little room for subtlety and gentility, is almost the order of the day, today. It is believed that "books needn't be watched at all; if people are reading, after all, they must be bright and wouldn't be affected by all the stuff."

The American society has come to accept, '*Good* bad taste and *bad* bad taste. Good bad taste is always fueled by rage and anger with humour thrown in. Bad bad taste is fueled by stupidity and ignorance, and it comes out as anger'.

The Liberal American tolerates everything but intolerance. He believes that the so-called blasphemous and pornographic images and writings that are called art, must be popular; for if they were not so, no body would worry about them.

But the repercussions are there for anyone to see. Murders and rapes committed by the juvenile are multiplying. Teenage pregnancies have reached alarming proportions. Sex and violence is deemed entertaining. It is said that most parents are worried not so mueh about sex but combination of sex and violence.

WHY THIS CONTROVERSY ?

Apart from the fact that a House Sub-Committee was recently considering the two bills designed to keep the National Endowment of Arts in business for another five years, it is believed that there are other factors that are stimulating the controversy. The dilemma of the Rightists in 1990 is that cold war has thawed. The fading of Communism is also diverting the attention of the conservative religious groups to get preoccupied with domestic issues. They have failed to reverse the prevailing laws on abortion, school prayer and homosexuality. Indecency in art and literature could be a promising plank to agitate about.

THE CAMPAIGN

The campaign is launched mainly by the evanglical movement that emerged in the USA in the last two decades. Its main protagonists are : Rev. Donald E. Wildmon, Pat Robertson and Mr. Sheldon.

Thousands of photos of works considered blasphemous or obscene are posted to the members of Congress and full page Ads figure in the papers. They mail lists of members who 'support pornography' to voters, and inundate legislators with letters and telephone calls. They believe that 'there is no justification for taxing lower income groups to support glitzy art shows and theatre productions frequented primarily by the wealthy'.

Mr. Wildmon has created several organizations including the National Federation of Decency and the Coalition of Better Television. These groups boycott stores that sell *Playboy* and *Penthouse* magazine and

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DIRTY WORDS & ABSURD IMAGES

companies that sponsor morally dubious programmes on television. Mr. Wildmon maintains that 'art is best served if government is not involved, You see, for 25 years, the NEA has been selecting some artists to approve the grant and denying other artists. That is a form of government censorship'. Mr. Sheldon is said to receive $400,000 to $500,000 in donation every year for his activities.

THE OTHER SIDE

It is not as though the other side is taking it lying down. Pat Williams, the head of the House Sub-Committee who held hearings on NEA, says; 'The artists and other people who understand the need for vigilant maintenance of freedom of expression have reached Capitol Hill with thousands of letters and personal influence, but it is not as overwhelming as the flood created by the evangelist right'.

The agitators, it is said, don't know much, but they know what's right. They wouldn't have their tax dollars to support what is not acceptable to them.

The artists assert : 'We know pornography when we see it, but the freedom to create it is invisible'. Their fear is that high quality progressive art will be stifled for the sake of community standards. They maintain that there would always be filth in the fringes of entertainment.

NEA & ITS WORK

The National Endowment of the Arts which receives an annual grant of $170 million has become a *cause celebre.* The Agency has been in existence for 25 years, making grants to artists-in-residence, programme in public schools, helping to set up satellite art museums in rural areas and supporting regional dance companies, symphonies, theatre companies and chorus groups. No body ever bothered about it. And now when they hear about it, it is about some naughty photographs, as if it is all the outfit's total contribution to arts in America.

In July 1989, an amendment was pushed through banning grants to 'obscene and indecent art'. The Arts Endowment now requires artists receiving money to sign a pledge vowing to behave, which several artists have resisted. This year Rep. Philip Crane, Republican from Illinois, introduced a bill to abolish the Endowment.

Apart from this, parents are giving media executives a warning—'Make your marketing decisions more respectable or we will get government to make them for you'.

In the meanwhile, President Bush has said, while he doesn't like 'some of the filth' that passes for art and gets federal funds, he likes government censorship even less. The Endowment, maintains Mr. Bush, should continue doing its job to promote arts.

Padma Bhushan Sh. K.S. Duggal is a well-known Punjabi and Urdu writer. He is also associated with several literary and cultural organisations in the national capital.

LIGHT VERSE & HUMOUR . . .
FOR THE FUN OF IT . . . !

M. K. Naik : INDIAN LIMERICKS

Writers' Workshop, Calcutta (1990) 30 pages, Rs. 40/-.

Comment by Prema Nandkumar

Is our clerihew-friend, Emken (M. K. Naik) a helpless prisoner of the English language which he has controlled for several decades ? Or, is this hilarious side-activity of a serious critic, a conscious thumbing of one's nose at the academic pomposities committed by Indians in the name of Milton and Shakespeare ? Whatever the reason that prompted Emken to publish a twin for *Indian Clerihews*, one thing is clear; he is not serious. There need be no imaginative symbol-hunting on our part when we read his limericks which draw up a regular tourist list.

This is an advantage for us. While many poets expect the hapless reviewer-critic to study their oracular confessionals in terms of continguity, structuralism and contextual romanticism, all that Emken asks of us is to spend a few moments with his light verse. Not an unpleasant diversion either. Here is a neat twist from a library-bug :

"There was an old man of Ahmedabad
Who said, This heat drives me mad,
Dante's inferno
May be worse, you know,
But this place is Ahem-damn-bad".

And an absolute horror that could please Frederick Forsythe :

"There was a young man named Rama
who diabolically detested Grammar.
He poisoned verbs
With deadly herbs
And split infinitives with a hammer".

While the style of the limericks (there was . .there was. . . repeated at length) does result in monotony, there are no inexcusably unreadable verses in this carpet-bag.

INVITING TROUBLE ?

But Emken is sure to get into hot waters with women's fora for his unconcealed glee in depicting the second sex as a bundle of avoidable weaknesses. That women are snooty, that their stutter is a matter for jokes, that they are wary of taking baths, that Ferdinand could not stand Miranda and that the feminists excel in double-talk. But the verses about the 'young feminist of note' and the young lady who should watch her virtue have such an aura of sophisticated debauchery about them that they will get a good conduct-certificate from Khushwant Singh. What more does an Indian Limericist in English aspire for in this world of humble criticism ?

Dr. Prema Nandakumar is a well-known writer and critic, based at Sri Rangam (T.N.).

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THE BHADRALOK PHENOMENON IN BENGAL

by Sajal Basu

The concept of the *Bhadralok* or the perceptional requisities for it, has been associated with some values and qualities often unrelated to a closed system of caste hierarchy. Though some of the values : stigma on manual labour, deportment, way of life etc. were identified with high-caste Hindus, but its membership was not limited to *dwija* castes. The existence of multi-caste *dals* in nineteenth century Bengal and their role in reform and radicalisation of social process bespeaks of a more open situation, where one could be recognised as a *babu* and/or *bhadralok* through personal achievements.

NEO-BABUS & NEO-ZAMINDARS

However, *babu* and *bhadralok* should not be treated as synonymous or identical. The former is related to a form of expression,of respectability;the latter being a process and phenomenon. There is said to have been a process of conversion in Bengal's social mileu after the Permanent Settlement (1793) when the Bengalee merchants and middlemen, for the sake of status, invested money in land. This is supposed to be the beginning of the Bengalees' withdrawal from commercial and industrial activities. But the process of conversion of Bengalee merchants into landlords has been exaggerated. We have the instances of a contrary process in Kashimbazar Raj family and other zamindars who shifted their resources to industries and enterprises like colliery, banking, glass sand, silk, tin-printing etc. Actually, the Bengalees took the lead in setting up cotton mills, iron and steel, and engineering industries.

In fact, the merchants and the middlemen started appropriating land long before the Permanent Settlement. Due to utter chaos during *Das Sana* (ten years' settlement) *Panch Sana* (five years'), *Suryasta* law (auction of land in case the farmer failed to pay due revenues before the sunset), lands were transferred to these neo-zamindars, without involving much capital. These people, in their bid to emulate the zamindars, would often engage in exuberance and entertainments, often irritating to the people. They were sarcastically called as *neo Babus*. And '*Babu*' has always been used as a prefix of respectability before a person's name. The neo-babus could or might not be recognised as *bhadraloks*, since *bhadraloks* represented certain values, attitudes and culture achievements in education and valued professions, self respect, and progressive ideology at the perceptional level

THE BHADRALOK PHENOMENON

"It is better to look on the *bhadralok* as constituting a respectable society rather than a single status group, which implies a misleading homogeneity". (*Social Conflict and Political Unrest in Bengal* (1875–1927)—Rajat Kanta Ray—*Oxford*—1984) The bhadralok, or *bhadra samaj* (society) may not implicate an economic class or open status group. Sociologists have earmarked certain conditions as wealth, *Kaulinya* and accomplishments in non-manual occupations. However, these are not close to specification of bhadralok-hood.

In a questionnaire to 50 selected samples made by (this author (*Garibi, Akankhar Bisform O' Bidroha*,— Sajal Basu—*Calcutta*-1985), most of the respondents unhesitatingly placed themselves as belonging to the middle class. Regarding the characteristics of bhadraloka gentle manner, consistency, decency, virtuosity, reasonable mind etc. have been said to be the main components. Rudra has been more categorical in characterising the Bengalee middle class bhadralok as : "though a wide difference may exist in economic status, in their economic habits these people behave in identical way." A middle class family may have three brothers—one a barrister, another a school teacher, and if the third happens to be a railway signalman, their economic behaviour, aspirations, or social ideas would almost be same. The type of hospitable reception offered to a guest in the marriage ceremony of the barrister's daughter and signalman's daughter would be identical. In offering foods and entertainment, presentation of matrimonial gifts etc., they live in the same world of ideas. To maintain this, the teacher or signalman would not hesitate to borrow. (Ashoke Rudra in "*Bangalee Madhyabitta Charitra*" in S. Basu (ed) *Bharater Samaj Bhabna—Calcutta*, 1982.)

MODERNITY WITH A CAUSE

Alongwith their orientation to modernity, they possess another quality—*viz* a spirit of self-sacrifice for a cause, their rebel character. Though, Rudra considers this to be of suicidal consequences, the unique rebelliousness of the Bengalee bharaloks has remained unique in the political history of India. Annada Sankar Roy, an eminent Bengali author held, "the Bengali middle classes should not be considered as bourgeois; may be bourgeois class would grow here. But why should they hath the scorn of bourgeois' scath : Why men like Iswar Chandra idyasagar, Michael Madhusudan Dutta, Bankim Chandra, Vivekananda be held answerable for those bourgeois". (*Pran Rakshar O' Bangsa Rakshar Adikar*—Ananda Sankar Ray—*Calcutta*, 1971)

In our country, stratification of society into upper middle, middle, bourgeois class on economic basis, as has been in the west, could hardly be meaningful. The growth and development of the middle ctass bhadraloks has been shaped by our country's situation. In Japan, for example, the traditional middle classes (land properietors, small businessmen) have been displaced by new middle classes in the employment sectors, *viz.* in administration and corporations. This traditional group had significant influence in community life, local issues but irrelevant in greater sphere. (*Japan's New Middle Class*—Ezra Vogel—*California University*, 1968)

In India, and for that matter in Bengal, the situation has been quite different. The regional elites in India, even have different orientations and peculiar

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composition. Some western scholars have preferred to categorise U.P. as a non-region, hence consider her elite as a national elite. In Bengal, Tamilnadu, Maharastra, the bhadraloks, Tamil Brahmins and Chitapavan Brahmins, are said to constitute regional elites in these States.

ECONOMIC MARGINALISATION BUT SOCIO-POLITICAL ASPIRATIONS

The middle class bhadraloks could not be equated with pre-industrial age British middle class in economic and social criteria. It is difficult to specify the definition and social position of the bhadraloks We have already mentioned about some values and qualities upheld by them. Since their emergence, the bhadraloks have been able to retain a commanding position, both in social and political movements during the British period. And subsequently, though they continued to be influential at the social level, in economic sphere, their place has been marginal. Economically, Bengal has remained the hunting ground of foreign and national capitalists, and under the control of outsider businessmen and traders. Hence, the economic development of the bhadraloks has been maintained since a long time. In the post-independence period too, this trend of socio-political domination with economic handicaps continued. Rather, the State economy has totally gone into the grip of the outsider communities.

Due to this economic marginalisation, the ambivalence and contradiction of the bhadraloks have been manifested in politics and ideology. Such dichotomy may be created by the disjunction between culturally prescribed aspirations and socially structured avenues for realising these aspirations, often described as 'opportunity structure'. It is "neither cultural conflict nor social conflict, but a contradiction between the cultural structure and the social structure". (*The Sociological Ambivalence and other Essays*—Robert Merton—*New York*, 1976.) It turns up when cultural values are internalised by people/group who have no access to act in accord with the values which they consider worth emulating.

ACTIVE SOCIAL REFORM & RADICAL POLITICS

The bhadralok group has been evolved through many cross-currents of change and economic transformations. As already stated, various land legislations and post-Permanent Settlement land relationship gave rise to the new set of landlords and rentiers. With the extension of colonial administrative network, educated professionals came up to utilise the new openings. All these groups formed the core of middle class intelligentsia or bhadraloks who spearheaded the activities in social reform and, through it, came gradually to politics The Br tish rulers considered them as parasitic, self-seekers having no link with the general populace. Thus they tried to undermine the movements led by this group for more equal opportunity in various sectors of colonial set-up. The Indian National Congress was also treated in a like manner during its early years.

WESTERN SCHOLARS' VIEWS

The western scholars' interpretations also tend to categorise this group as comprador, upper caste intelligentsia, who had nothing to do with the interests of the people at large. The secret terrorist movement and failure of the nationalist movement in the region to envelop the support of different communities, *e.g.* Muslims, downtrodden castes, tribals have been cited as illustration to this. Bengalee nationalism, both of militant revolutionary and Swarajist brand, has been said to be elitist, urban upper-caste oriented that could hardly touch the heart of rural hinterland and its poor gentry.

After the militant revolutionary phase, with the rise of Gandhi's Non-Cooperation (1920-21), the bhadralok-oriented politics in Bengal fail-d to keep track with mobilisational politics, and, because of this lacking, the Bengal nationalist has been said to have lost the battle which was one one between poor men's champion Gandhi and parasitical Bengalee bhadraloks. Such simplistic analysis fails to appreciate the inherent nature of militant nationalism in a colonial regime. The extensive spadework involved and risky ventures in heroic individual actions had tacit support and sympathy of the people.

C. R. DAS & SWARAJ PARTY

Moreover, the Bengal Congress under C. R. Das, and Swaraj Party's politics could inspire a mass upheaval during the period of Non-Cooperation and Council entry, *Bengal Pact* etc. To mobilise mass support in favour of his alternative non-cooperation proposal as against Gandhi's, Das proposed restructuring of the Congress organisation itself, enrolment of all classes of the people through network of district and local committees, forming a Committee of Action (future Congress Working Committee) etc. In fact, this had infused a change, a radicalisation of politics in the province. And the main thrust of this process was given by the bhadralok leadership.

This radicalisation of politics and society has been the most unique feature in Bengal, as Partha Chatterjee has held. He has tried to collate the process in changing froms of agrarian property and structure of politics. In the sphere of politics, two domains have been identified, *viz.* legal political forms of state power, and class power. (*Bengal 1920-27 : The Land Question*, Partha Chatterjee, *Calcutta, 1984*).

LONG PROCESS OF RADICALISATION

The radicalisation, however, has beer a long-drawn process in Bengal since the rise of social reform movemens and organised groups in the form of multi-caste *dals*, social organisations, journals and newspapers, professional associations, eductional and research institutes. Actually, these forums provided channels of indentity formation to the Bengali intelligentsia as against the racist discrimination policy of the British rulers during eighteenth and nineteenth centuries As discussed elsewhere by this author, the *dals* in Calcutta and suburbs became the platforms of tussle between the progressives and conservatives, *e.g.* in the movements against *suttee*, child marriage, *purdah* etc. (*Factions, Politics and Ideology : Coalition Politics in Bengal*, Sajal Basu, *Calcutta, 1990*). The

(*Continued*)

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THE BHADRALOK PHENOMENON IN BENGAL

newly emerged composite human settlements in Calcutta, and subsequently its upgrading to British capital, initiated a new basis of human interactions.

As one observer said, all religions were tolerated,—"inhabitants of Calcutta are distinguished for liberality which unquestionably cannot be paralleled among the nations of the universe." (*Early History of Calcutta, P. 58*, Benoy Krishna Deb, *Calcutta, 1977*).

The Asiatic Society was formed in 1784. The first *Madrasa*, Calcutta Madrasa began in 1780 on the European model; English education began as early in 1773-74; in 1780, a few schools came up The first newspaper Hicky's *Bengal Gazzettee* was published in 1780.

SOURCES OF RENAISSANCE

Should these new institutions be considered as primary sources for the subsequent nineteenth century social awareness and Bengalee Renaissance, it may be open to question. That radicalisation process had been pushed through by the cross-currents, the inner push and pull between forces in the Indian National Congress, parallel streams of reform movements, trade union movement etc. could hardly be questioned, For this reason, the radicalisation of the Bengal polities and role of the bhadralok leadership should not be vested with such unilinear explanation based on charging structure of production.

For example, Rammohun made a fortune out of money-lending business to the *sahibs*; in the course of it, he came across some British officers, and later got involved in reform activities. How could we assess the historic role of Rammohun, if such economic background is taken into account ? From the Marxian angle, his hang-over with landed interest and paternal property may be linked up with his pro-western stand on the issue of indigo plantation, eduction etc. But that could hardly offer any explanation of his progressive role in infusing modern thoughts and methods.

Many individual actions,—for example, those of Tilka Majhi, Birsa Munda, Sidhu-Kanhu Santal, Kshudiram Bose, Prafulla Chakhi, Matangini Hazara —may be cited in which class power and forms of production could hardly explain the motives, if linked up with class factors.

Contrary to conventional Marxist view, in tne Indian situation, superstructure has influenced the basic structure and has played a more decisive role in precipitating the contradictions. According to Ashok Rudra, the ideology of Brahminism, based on *Varna* system, remained the source of Bangalee middle class ambivalence and contradictions. ("*Bengalee Madhyabitta Charitra*").

HOTCH-POTCH, YET THE *ELAN VITAL*

The bhadralok leadership and politics, as such, have been influenced by this ideology rather than motivated by class considerations. Of late, Rudra has called the intelligentsia as the ruling class by virtue of occupying decisive positions in decision making and accruing benefit from the policy of the state. According to him, the ideology of this bhadralok intelligentsia class is a "hotch-potch of the modern and the traditional, the western and the Indian, the radical and the conservative, rational and the superstitious. ("*Emergence of the Intelligentsia as a Ruling Class*".—*Economic and Political Weekly*—Ashok Rudra—January 21, 1989). At the same time, they remained the *elan vital* of anti-imperialist struggle and radicalisation of politics. This vocal, assertive group formed the core of militant revolutionary activities, the moderate and extremist forces in Congress, leadership of the left parties and trade unions

1930's : CHANGE IN OUTLOOK

The social context of radicalisation in Bengal politics, according to Marxist scheme, was the change in social outlook and culture of the bhadralok during 1930's. At that time, they got dissociated from fragmentary land interests, and their livelihood became entirely urban, *viz.* in administration, small trade and commerce, education and professions. So, they sought to forge new links with the masses in militant trade unionism, radical programmes of land reform, and new vanguardism. This has been said to motivate the bhadraloks to review the issues in terms of more 'objective' categories.

But the first successful Railway Strike took place in 1928—that subsequently became the symbol of working class solidarity. [*Note :—Kharagpur Railway strike started as Satyagrah against retrenchment, which faced police firing and later was joined by other workers.*] the historic march of the workers to the Congress Session (1930) and holding a meeting in the *pandal*, the all-Bengal Jute Mills Strike in 1929 *etc.* reveal the picture of a prior consciousness. Not to speak of the formation of AITUC in 1920, and Sashipada Banerjee's reform work among the labourers, *viz.* through his journal *Bharat Shramajibi* (1874), Workingmen's Savings Bank (1871).

The radicalisation process found its fertile soil in Bengal due to the existence of various factors, *e.g.* less influence of caste in politics, legacy of liberal ideologies and cults etc.

The process was initiated during Chaitanya's time, got its on-going march as early a during the eighteenth century; subsequently extended to renaissance in the nineteenth century.

THE PHENOMENON - OUTSIDE THE CLASS OR CASTE MODEL

Following the rationale of Marxist frame of analysis, let us assume that the individual actions mentioned above, were stray cases, and that individual/groups do participate in collective actions to serve their group/class interests. Thus they tend to influence the State Policy, or put pressure on the decision-making bodies to pursue such policy that would promote their

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The Bhadralok Phenomenon in Bengal

(Coutinued)

causes. In that sense, State may be considered to serve the interests of certain classes at the cost of the interests of other classes. But the mechanism by which class interests, interests of the ruling classes get translated into State politics, still remains a black box in Marxian Theory of State. There may have been a coalition of ruling classes, plurality of class interests which the political parties have to serve, and the State enjoys autonomy in serving plurality of class interests. [Ashok Rudra : *Article—"Emergence of the Intelligentsia as a Ruling Class"—Economic and Political Weekly, 1989.*]

Hence, we prefer to treat the political radicalisation in Bengal as an outcome of bhadralok phenomenon that could hardly be framed in any class or caste model. As the developed, urban edition of nineteenth century *babu* and upper-caste middle class gentry, bhadralok phenomenon has been uuique in quality, composition and system of absorbing erstwhile non-*bhadra* groups. The former categorisation of *bhadra* and *chotalok* (low caste, down-trodden) groups is no more appropriate.

BHADRALOK QUALITIES *Vs.* PAROCHIAL LOYALITIES

Drawing the examples of Mahishya caste group's movement for upgradation or political leverage of this group in some areas of Midnapore and 24 Paraganas district also bear no relevance. Since, caste affiliations do not offer any advantage at the macro level politics of the State and State's political parties, such groups have to acquire education/professional qualities, and political acumen so as to get berth in the leadership, or climb up in the social ladder, Those who could acquire such qualities and assert *Kaulinya*, have been absorbed as part of the bhadralok society irrespective of caste-tribe affiliation With this incorporation, the concerned group/people get identified with certain valucs, e.g. love aud appreciation for Bengali literature and culture, pride for Bengal's historic role in independence struggle, adoration of humanist principles which are synonymous with the bhadralok society. And once accommodated, they cease to bear the inherent loyalties like caste, community, locality, or/and carry any caste-class hatred. Rather, they try to uphold those bhadralok qualities even at the cost of parochial loyalties. So it is better to treat the bhadralok as a conglomerate group rather than any class or status group even, as these imply some sense of homogeneity.

Basically, at the individual level, a bhadralok is a standard-bearer of scepticism, a proud literati, a bit provincial, sometimes approximating parochialism, a megalomaniac about his culture, politically anti-Hindi and anti-Gandhi/Nehru, But in the larger sphere, they are radical, secular, caste-free, humanist and exponents of universalism. This has also been manifested in the politics of the State—at the village, small town level there may be factors of caste, community, region being decisive, but in the State-level politics, such factors do not count. □

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A DEAD OR DYING CITY ?

Ashok Mitra : CALCUTTA ON THE EVE OF HER TERCENTENARY

Abhinav Publications, Calcutta (1990), pp. vii+131, price Rs. 150/-.

Review by Sajal Nag

This somewhat inappropriately titled book is a collection of ten essays which have been selected from the author's already published as well as unpublished papers. The result is, indeed, 'less of a book on a single theme', with focus 'on a cluster of concerns', and the central concern is, of course, Calcutta.

Calcutta did not develop as a Bengali city, though unfortunately it has become one now. It was an Indian city. From the time Job Charnock founded it, Calcutta continued to be the centre of attention, whose prosperity was even envied by the *Bombay Census Report (1881).* Then came a time when Nehru was prompted to call it a 'dead city' (out of anguish at its gradual decline); followed by his grandson, late Rajiv Gandhi who, at a later date, stirred a hornet's nest by calling it a 'dying city'.

BEFORE & SINCE WORLD WAR I

What has happened to Calcutta ? How did the tables turn ? These are some of the questions asked and remedies suggested in the essays in this collection.

Till the begining of the second world war, Calcutta was perhaps one of the most satisfying cities in the East including Singapur, Hongkong and Bombay, writes the author. The reason was the fact of Calcutta's industrial diversification, keeping pace with its population growth, and the low level of unemployment upto 1940, contained well within 7 per cent of its adult male population. Calcutta's efficient port and transport facilities matched the city's industrial activity which, in turn, was well sustained by its abundance of industrial water and power, The city's stock of skilled human resources and entrepreneurship was the richest, not only of all cities in India but the entire East.

The second world war converted Calcutta into a major forward-base, and quickened its industrial enterprise, attracting an unprecedentedly large volume of unskilled and semi-skilled labour to man the mushrooming industrial enterprises attending the wartime supply needs. Housing, water supplies, sanitation, sewerage and general municipal infrastructure, including transportation and communication services, were strained beyond limits; and hence it inevitably failed to keep up with the rate of population growth caused by new migration. Civic amenities began to fall apart. The gap between population and industrial growth accelerated with the influence of East Pakistan refugees. Thus, the fall of the mighty had begun.

WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE CITY ?

The major problem with Calcutta was, as the author has pointed out, that it was not growing fast enough. In the last decade, Calcutta's population grew

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ONE WORLD — MANY FACES

Romen Basu : RUSTLING OF MANY WINDS
(A Collection of Short Stories)
Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi (1982) Rs. 60/-.
SANDS OF : TIME (A Novel)
Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi (1985) Rs. 110/-.

Short Comments by S. Gupta

Romen Basu worked with the U.N. for 35 years and has done assignments in Thailand, Libya and the U.A.E. He has also worked with the UNESCO—sponsored Lumbini project in Nepal. Besides, he has published a number of novels and several collections of short stories and is recognised as a perceptive and articulate Indo-Anglian writer.

MANY WORLDS — ONE HUMANITY

There are 25 short stories in the "*Rustling of Many Winds*". They are very different from the usual stories by Indian or foreign writers, because they have an international flavour, whether we look at the settings or the characters or the plot. In this sense, they have a charm of their own—the charm of novelty. The authenticity of the environment, the variety of the characters and the vivacity of the dialogues make the stories interesting It is indeed extraordinary that the author has been able to imbibe and express the thought patterns and the idioms of so many nationalities with such remarkable faithfulness. It shows what a truly international outlook he has acquired, how keen his powers of observation are and how universal is his interest in human beings. From the literary point of view, the dialogues are perhaps the most interesting parts of his short stories. They are lively, often sparkling and always racy. The plots, however, are not always well-constructed and gripping; and the stories are sometimes left hanging in the air. In many of the stories, we get a glimpse into the toils and travails of ordinary human beings all the world over, which bears witness to the universality of the author's sympathies and his ability to clothe them in the garment of a short story.

A MIGRANT TO THE U.S.A.

In the "*Sands of Time*", we are given a glimpse into the prejudices against the Jews in the story of Tamara, a Jewish migrant to the U.S.A. But, Tamara is only a peg on which the author hangs his views and comments regarding the United Nations—its various agencies, the international problems it has had to deal with, the Secretariat and its international civil servants and the Secretaries General it has had. The analysis and the comments make interesting reading; and it is difficult to disagree with the view that the U.N. is still in its formative stage. The views of an insider regarding the working of the United Nations system will be particularly interesting to students of the system. One only wishes that they had been incorporated in a political treatise on the U.N. rather than in a novel. In a work of fiction, one expects a plot as well as living characters. As it happens, the presentation often becomes laboured, and the book has to be read with deliberate effort more as an essay than as a novel.

The United Nations are a very curious world, which I had the opportunity of watching from very close quarters when I was a member of the Indian Delegation from 1965 to 1968. The pressures to which the Secretaries-General are subjected by the Great Powers make his position truly unenviable. The principal organs of the U.N. remind one of a stage where the delegates read out the parts written by their foreign offices. The Secretariat seethes with jealousies and rivalries. The facade is impressive; but behind it lies a boiling cauldron of national and individual rivalries, jealousies and ambitions. It will still take a long time before the U.N. becomes an effective instrument for the maintenance of international Peace and Security.

Jaipur-based, Dr. S. Gupta is a former Indian Diplomat and a former University Professor.

(Contd.) **A Dead or Dying City ?**

by only 8% as against Greater Bombay's 39%. It is indeed a revelation that in spite of the apparent squalor, the crowds, the swarming streets, mushrooming bustees, technically Calcutta had not grown fast enough.

Another trouble with Calcutta has been, unlike Bombay, its lack of a devoted band of industrialists and businessmen. Unlike their Bombay counterparts, Calcutta's industrialis s and businessmen came from elsewhere, with no thought of stake in the city to start with. Many of them still remain aloof from the affairs of the city. Some, out of a sense of diffidence and not belonging to the State

The author has taken up many such issues, and critically examined the roots of Calcutta's malady, and even suggested ways and means to overcome them : like the question of relevance of Kingsley and Kristof Report on providing houses to the urban poor, along with the urgency to invest in education, productivity, plant and capital for the upliftment of the city, and inquiry into the role of the implementing agencies.

NEED TO REDISTRIBUTE URBAN GROWTH

In fact, whatever growth Calcutta has had, it was in reality, at the expense of the rest of Bengal which was being increasingly ruralised. It can be checked only by redistribution of urban growth in West Bengal.

It is incredible that Calcutta is the only urban centre W st Bengal can boast of It is important to stop this hasty decline of Calcutta because, unlike other parts of India, it is the nerve-centre of entire eastern India, not just the State of West Bengal.

The book is a must for all those who are engaged in the task of making Calcutta better. Though it is less likely that a common reader would read this book, researchers and planners must be already using it. Mitra's usual touch of scholarship coupled with the skill of remarkable prose-writing enriches the essays. It is a pity that the book is shabbily treated as far as the cover-jacket is concened. For a 130-odd page book, the price (Rs. 150/-) is just unaffordable. This might be the complaint of young research scholars.

Dr. Sajal Nag is now at the Centre for Social Studies, South Gujarat University Campus, Surat. Author of "Roots of Ethmic Conflict : Nationality Question in North-East India", he has taught history at NEHU.

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POEMS OF DEFIANCE & RAGE

Malay Roychoudhury : SELECTED POEMS

Writers' Workshop, Calcutta (1989), pages 47; Rs. 40/-, flexiback—Rs. 30/-.

Comments by Brahma Dutta Sharma

Malay Roychoudhury's book *Selected Poems* is a collection of thirty poems which, as the poet writes, have been translated into English from Bengali. The poems can be put into 3 or 4 categories.

VICTIMS — DEFIANT & UNBEATEN

In the first category of poems, the poet voices the anger of the victims of atrocities. Victims have been subjected to various kinds of tortures; they have been beaten, or thrown on the rail-tracks to be crushed under trains, or lynched by mobs and so on; but none of them surrenders. Each of the victims either fights back or, at least, remains defiant. For instance, in the poem 'Chicken Roast' *(p. 9)* the persona who is in jail, where an undertrial is weeping and an injured person is wailing, is mentally preparing himself for yet another fight. In the poem 'Preparation' *(pp. 11-12)* a man from the Santhal tribe, recollects the wrongs done to the men and women of his community, and he prepares his stiletto to fight with. In, 'Repeat Uhuru', a man who claims to have kept alive a 'dynasty of faith' is facing the gallows, but instead of feeling cowed down, he has a hope that he will not face gallows everytime to keep his dynasty of faith alive. In 'Homology', one of those who have been deprived of even clothes and homes, or beaten, jailed, pushed off running trains, and interned, calls himself a 'seismic' machine showing what a nuclear clash will result in. In 'The Light' *(p. 16)* a man who is kicked on the belly and the chin so hard that blood begins to trickle down his lips, and its scalded on the hard breast with a hot metal rod, finds his vision eroded; but in order to fight back, he prepares his grit to encounter the hit.

TORTURED NON-CONFORMISTS

In most of these poems, the poet largely dwells on the ill-treatment and tortures the non-conformists have to undergo: 'Objectivity' *(p. 18)*, 'Dilemma' *(p. 22)* and, 'Existence' *(p. 22)*. In 'Objectivity' *(p. 18)* a man with his hands and feet tied, mouth gagged and several bones broken, left on the rail-road track, is slowly regaining consciousness to see a train rushing towards him. In 'Dilemma' *(p. 20)* a man is waylaid and assaulted by six or seven armed persons. In 'Existence' *(p. 22)*, the poet treats activities of violence and death like one's replacing a dead undertrial, a gang's breaking into a house to reach the wanted man, and a mob's lynching a man. In 'Wolf Dynasty' *(p. 26)*, the persona is given various threats for having turned up again and the person wielding power resolves to tear off his spermpots and close his lineage.

SOME FIGHT BACK

Then there are poems in which the victims become active and choose to fight out oppression. Such poems are 'Abhorred Emperor' *(p. 24)*, 'Uncle Chapter' *(p. 21)*, 'House Arrest' *(p. 19)*, and 'Classic Fraud' *(p. 17)*. In 'Abhorred Emperor', there is a coup in Bengal, as a result of which the emperor has to flee to a village in disguise, and the person who comes to power calls internees back and asks his people to crush the opponents ruthlessly. In 'Uncle Chapter', Yudhishthira's uncle says he had donated his fore-finger at Yudhishthira's behest and comes to challenge Yudhishthira and rip his war-cry open; the uncle believes that whatever punishment Yudhishthira may inflict on him, he will rip his feet on the ground and put a halo around the earth. In 'House Arrest' a victim breaks open the oppressor's house but spares everything else for the former occupant. In 'Classic Fraud', an erstwhile slave warns his master in the palanquin not to remain a burden any more or be prepared to face hell.

AGAINST THE ESTABLISHMENT

In the poems 'Motorbyke' *(p. 13)* and 'Shame on You Calcutta' *(p. 43)* the poet highlights the fact that the conditions created by the establishment are very sordid, and prophesies that when protests are there, the whole establishment will become only a heap of junk. In the poem, 'Shame on You Calcutta', he describes Calcutta as a city of eunuchs and pimps. In 'Motorbyke', the motorbyke is a symbol of the establishment moving fast and the poet gives a warning that when it meets an accident, the whole machine will be reduced to a heap of junk.

OF CONVERTS & CUT-THROATS...

To the third category, belongs the poem 'Counter Man' *(p. 10)* in which he describes the behaviour of the people converted to a religion insisting on circumcision, and highlights the fact that converts forsake their former principles and start killing people and raping women with utmost delight.

...AND CONFESSIONALS

To the fourth category belongs the poem 'Stark Electric Jesus' *(p. 44)* which is confessional. In this poem, the poet confesses that : ". . .nothing pleases me nothing sounds well" *(p. 44)*. He seems to be suffering from melancholia like Hamlet. Here the poet appears as a sex maniac and describe himself as a lover of an unresponding Shubha. The poet has given himself to despair and describes his fast moving towards death.

Malaya Choudhury makes use of myths to highlight the facts of the present. He does so, for instance, in the poem 'Uncle Chapter'. In a number of poems, he employs erotic imagery, wood imagery in 'Wolf Dynasty' and animal imagery in 'Throne of the Weevil' and 'Wolf Dynasty'. The poems are also highly symbolical as the motorbyke, beating, lynching and breaking into the house are all symbols (of defiance).

Dr. Brahma Dutta Sharma was formerly teaching English in the S. W. College, Hapur. He is now Head of the Deptt. of English, Kumaon University, Nainital.

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Three Women Poets

[There are many women poets flowering in different cultural regions of our land. IBC has, on some occasions, brought their fragrance within reach of our poetry—loving readers. Here are three fresh bouquets from Bihar, U.P. and Karnataka ! —Ed.]

FOUR POEMS OF FAITH & LIGHT

by **H. M. Chatterjee**

THIS WORLD OR THE NEXT

A wonder, a mystery, a mere guess
For those who wander in the wilderness
Fumbling, staggering on in life,
Getting involved in this earth's strife.

One light alone reveals this wonder,
One ray of hope breaks asunder
The horrors of the night and leaves bare
The world in its glory for all to stare.

Faith leaves this mystery a guess no more,
Strengthens them all who are weary and sore.
Plunging in the battle of the world bravely
They face the hazards of this life happily.

If faith in a better world that is to come
Helps us to live better in this one,
Why cherish any doubt for the world beyond
If doubts strangulate and do not lead on !

ENDURANCE

Alone in the dark wide world,
Alone on the frail ship of life,
At the mercy of mutinous waves,
To be tossed, yet not to be lost.

As the Light shows me the way,
As the Merciful holds the rudder,
And guides my ship to the shore,
Through the furious throng of the waves.

Till the darkness at last is covered,
Till the brightness eternally reigns—
—Lord grant me strength of endurance—
To say—"Not my will but Thine be done".

SONG OF LIFE

Sing a song of life's span,
It may be short or long,
Begins with childish fun and game
Goes on with love and song.

Some days, the sad and dark do bring
While shines the sun on others.

Each day adds on to heart and soul
The lines of deeds and thoughts
Till at last its over and done
And life's song is sung

We are the singers of this song
Our maker plays the tune.
If once or twice we may go wrong
He sets us right on tune.

DEATH

Is it going down the deep
Or rising above the skies
Does remaining thus in sleep
No waking up implies ?

Or does it lead to Eternity
Where all grief it will defy ?
It is the awful uncertainty
Whether to mourn or rejoice.

Dr. (Mrs.) H. M. Chatterjee is Professor of English in Ranchi Women's College, Ranchi.

MOMENTS & MEMORIES

POEMS by Esha Joshi

You, who hold back your tears, are not alone,
Your fellows are in many lands, entrapped in nets,
Trampled upon, cast out and torn,
Bruised in the nerve, like you, they have died many [deaths.

No one has ever touched their eyes or heart
Or said, "Weep, let hot the sting numb you within
Or sear your soul; who knows, the day may come at last
When all your tears will wash away the deadly stain of [this dread sin."

□ □

...And when I walk alone in the rain
On the tear-swept grass,
I still can hear you say, "Forget the pain
Of the parted years, all this will pass,

Keep what you had of me, of any joy
Or giving wisp of life's wonder
In our golden day, a fragile, fleeting toy
We could not keep nor ever yet surrender."

□ □

We were together in the bright sunshine
But I was groping for you in the dark
And though your hand was close in mine,
I could not feel the clasp nor mark

The moment when it slipped away.
There have been other hands since then to guide
But I have never let them sway [my arm
Me to forget emptiness you left within my palm.

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THESE MUSINGS

These musings that withold repose and make
Light flicker in the backward glance
And change known forms to wisps of wraiths
That hold my hand for lost and timeless hours
In all my ever-present yesterdays,
Their ministrations are the milestones
In my so short-lived time.

Walking in avenues of darkening trees
In the pale, moon-haunted night, there is
No sanctuary, no alter place, except
The closed-door mind, to hide
That still abiding fellowship,
Only the inner sense to keep
That mistlike touch and that ethereal bond.

Mrs. Esha Joshi, a pioneer among women members of the Indian Administrative Service (now retired) lives at Lucknow. She has come out with a collection of poetry "Sanctuary", and plans to publish a collection of stories.

[]

ART AND HAPPINESS & THAT SECRET SMILE

by **Louella Lobo Prabhu**

SURVIVAL THROUGH ART

Gifts the creator gave to me,
I cultivated carefully—
Made them yield flowers abundantly—
Sometimes with "Blood, sweet toil and Tears"
Without the crowd's applause and cheers,
Sans interaction with my peers !

My work I do, tucked out of sight,
Not by a city's neon light,
Bloodied but unbowed by the Fight—
Somehow to make my talents grow,
So that when from this world I go,
My art, my life-passage will show !

THE SEARCH FOR HAPPINESS

Had we the power to fuel our desire,
This universe would be one blazing pyre,
And from the flowing embers left behind,
We would remake a world we have in mind !

....

A place which is a scented verdant glade,
Where streamlets flow, and blossoms never face;
Where we can linger, while we stake a lease
On Hope; that for a space, Time's race will cease.

....

We ask for little but these wants on earth
A time to live and love; an hour of mirth,
With memories to cherish and to keep
Before the Curtain falls, and we must sleep.

....

For when we hear the voice of wisdom sound,
It says, if we must lie beneath the ground,
With heart beats, stilled, and bodies stiff and cold,
In Life, we must transmute each day to gold.

THE MONA LISA OF LEONARDO

The time—dawn of the 15th century,
Florence, the place—gem of the Renaissance;
The artist Leonardo da Vinci,
His brush with magic creating romance
As he with practised skill of hand and eye,
At Mona Lisa looks, seeking to trace,
(Against backdrop of earth... trees...rocks...and sky)
What put that shadow-smile upon her face ?
Her tapered fingers joined in quiet repose;
Her wavy dark hair parted, bear the style,
Which in each Leondaro painting glows,
But nothing says about her secret smile !
Viewers find in it what they went to see—
Correctly : Beauty's heart is mystery !

REFLECTIONS ON BEAUTY

POETIC AND ARTISTIC EXPRESSIONS

"Beauty is Truth; Truth Beauty"—John Keats said.
By just one hair, are men by Beauty led.
In "The Rape of the Lock", was Pope's refrain.....
Byron wrote of 'light' and 'dark' Beauty's reign,
Goya's Duchess of Alba . , . clad . . . unclad....
Michelangelo's Pieta, pure—but sad;
Gaugin's voluptuous women, skin-bronze gold,
Though different, are all cast in Beauty's mould !

....

A PHILOSOPHIC SPECULATION

Can Beauty, then, be deemed an absolute;
Or is it just a Circumstantial Truth ?
What is accepted as a comely face,
Varies, it would appear in Time and Place,
The Reubens form today seems overblown,
By neuter fashion-models overthrown,
Their bodies—less of Woman, more of Boy :
In female curves, designers find on joy !

....

NEVERTHELESS A RECOGNISABLE NORM

Despite diversities our human eyes,
When they see Beauty....Beauty recognise
Instinctively....still better when we learn
With trained senses rare facets to discern !

....

THE MARKS OF BEAUTY !

Not just skin colour, but texture and tone;
Fine facial features sculpted bone by bone;
Eloquent eyes, the windows of the soul;
Speaking hands make true Beauty's picture whole—
In Verse; Paiating and Sculpture. But a Light,
Beamed From Within also needs to shine bright—
Vivacity of mind; goodness of heart;
In Living Human Beauty Plays A Part.

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A LOST PARADISE

Pran Nath Seth : FIJI : A PARADISE IN PERIL
Sterling Publishers Private Ltd., New Delhi Price Rs. 150

Comment by Kewal Khanna

FIJI is a cluster of about 320 islands, in the South West Pacific 105 of them with 7,000 square miles being inhabited The longest island is known as Viti Levu with an area of 4,000 sq miles; capital Suva is situated in this big island. The Fijians believe that their forefathers landed from somewhere near lake Tanganiyka in Africa. Till the advent of Europeans, the Fijians were divided into small tribes speaking different dialects and having no written language. The history is traced from many travelogues written by Europeans travellers. A thousand years ago, it is believed, a large number of Polynesian ancestors, who were less dark skinned and had sharp features, came and settled on the Fijian islands by grabbing the prime land.

Captain Cook discovered the Fijian islands in July 1774, and recorded his observations on the basis of testimony of the Tongans—"Feejee and Tangataboo".... engaged in war against each other, and the inhabitants of the latter are often so much afraid of their enemy that they bend the body forward and cover the face with their own hands, to express the sense of their own inferiority to the Feeje men. Early Feeje men were known to be treacherous cannibals."

History of Fiji revolves around a man called Ratu Seru Cakobaru, the Chief of Bua, who later proclaimed himself as the King of Fiji. After numerous wars with his neighbours, he sought a safe way by becoming a Christian along with his subjects. It was Cakobaru, who, with the help of European settlers, formed a new government Due to poor economy, at his own request by the styled King Cokabau, the House of Commons approved the annexation of Fiji including Cakobau's request for tile, salary and land rights for Fijians, and Fiji became another Jewel of the Crown, a British colony.

Pran Seth counts in a chronological order, the many historical events of introduction of the Indian labour in the British colonies with the abolition of slavery. The first Indian had landed in Fiji in 1811, Captain Dilon. Recruitment for Fiji started in late 1878, and Fiji government ordered its immigration office in Calcutta to recruit 400 adults. By 1879-1916, there had been 60,965 immigrants. The Indians worked as labourers on plantation fields, helped build a sugar industry and saved Fijians from extermination and exploitation. The poor living conditions, having no privacy for the Indian labour who had built the early Fijian economy, give a horrible picture, so much so that a man cooked, ate, bathed, entertained, slept and mated in the same room.

The book contains ten chapters, beginning from Cannibalism to Christianity and ending with Fiji Todaya—Crisis of Confidence. It is an indepth study of India's historical links for more than a century and contribution to the island's economy. It were the Britishers who played the game of divide and rule by poisoning the Fijian's minds with fears of Indian domination. Fiji with 48 per cent of Indian population has now no place for them in the power games. Lt. Col. Rabuka of the Royal Fiji Army, after assuming office as Prime Minister, has sought to prevent Indians from being elected to the posts of Prime Minister, President, Army or Police Chief. The illegal government had expelled 25,000 Indians.

The Indo-Fijians are facing the greatest challenge of their life in Fiji, with their dreams shattered and faith shaken. On an average, over 500 Indians are leaving Fiji every month to settle overseas. The author's indepth study of Indo Fijians and their future hold bleak unless the Fijians; decide to change the direction of their government.

"Fiji : A Paradise in Peril" is a historical analysis of early Indian settlers who had built Fiji's economy for more than a century and their present predicament which has become a human problem. The problem of Indo-Fijians presented by Pran Seth is addressed to international community and is a naked truth. It is interesting, fascinating and one feels like reading it as a travelogue.

Mr. Kewal Khanna, a man of finance by profession retains his journalistic interests and a fondness for books. He is now a frequent contributor to this journal and a Jaipur-based English Daily.

Poems by Lonella Lobo Prabhu

REFLECTIONS ON BEAUTY
(Continued)

CULTIVATING GOD'S GIFTS

Inner and outer Beauty few possess;
It Is For Us To Make Much More From Less
Tending the soul, mind body, face God gave
In life's journey from cradle to the gave !

....

EVERY ONE IS BEAUTIFUL TO SOMEONE

To some—these are the very lucky few –
Universal accolades may be due :
But those not quite so obviously endowed,
At least from One Person must hear avowed—
Acknowledgement of Beauty, said to lie,
Not in a glass, but the behoider's eye !

Poet and publisher, pianist and music composer, Programme Compere, radio and TV artiste, educationist and social worker—these several active parts make up the many facets of the rich and colourful personality of Mangalore-based (Mrs.) Louella Lobo Prabhu.

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THE MARTYR'S NOTEBOOK

[Another instalment from the Notebook of Bhagat Singh indicating what he was reading in the Jail]

Page 19 (16)

Freedom

Men !—Whose boast it is that ye
Come of fathers, brave and free,
If there breathe on earth a slave,
Are ye truly free and brave ?

If you do not feel the chain
When it works a brother's pain,
Are ye not base slaves indeed,
Slaves unworthy to be freed ?

Is true Freedom but to break
Fetters for our own dear sake,
And, with leathern hearts, forget
That we owe mankind a debt ?
No ! True Freedom is to share
All the chains our brothers wear,
And, with heart and hand, to be
Earnest to make others free !

They are slaves who fear to speak
For the fallen and the weak;
They are slaves who will not choose
Hatred, scoffing and abuse,
Rather than in silence shrink
From the truth they needs must think;
They are slaves who date not be
In the right with two or three.

"James Russell Lowell" (p. 189)

[American poet, (1819-91) essayist and editor—of Atlantic Monthly. Wrote several memorial odes after the Civil War; was also American minister in Spain (1877-80) and England (1880-85) —Eds.]

Page 20 (17)

Full many a gem of purest ray serve
The dark unfathomed caves ocean bear;
Full many of flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

[Source not given. It is from "Elegy written in a Country Churchyard" by Thomas Gray (1716-71) the well-known English poet. —Ed.]

Invention : Hitherto it is questionable if all the mechanical inventions yet made have lightened the day's toil of any human being.

J. S. Mill, 199

[Well-known essayist and philosopher (1808-73) Founder of the Utilitarian Society and author of several books on philosophy, political economy and reform. —Eds]

Alms : "There is no one on earth more disgusting and repulsive than he who gives alms. Even as there is no one so miserable as he who accepts them."

Maxim Gorky p. 204

[Famous Russian writer—Pen-name of Alexey Maximovich Penshkov (1888-1936) —Ed]

Liberty

Those corpses of youngmen,
Those martyrs that hang from the gibbets—
Those hearts pierced by the grey lead,
Cold and motionless as they seem, live elsewhere
With unslaughtered vitality.
They live in other yougmen, O kings !
They live in other brothers again ready to defy you !
They were purified by death—
Page 21 (18) they were taught and exalted !

Not a grave for the murder'd for freedom,
but grows seed for freedom, in its turn to bear seed.
Which the wind carry afar and re-sow, and the
rains and the snows nourish.
Not a disembodied spirit can the weapons of tyrant loos
But it stalks invincibly over the earth, whispering,
counselling, cautioning.

(Walt Whitman p. 268)*

[Walt Whitman (1819-92) had a humble start with little education and worked his way through to win recognition late in life. Now acknowledged as a great and popular poet. *Book not mentioned. —Eds.]

Free Thought : "If there is anything that cannot bear free thought, let it crack."

Windell Phillips p. 271

[Wendell Phillips, American orator and reformer (1811-1884); also active in the anti-slavery movement Eds]

State : "Away with the State ! I'will take part in that revolution. Undermine the whole conception of a state, declare free choice and spiritual kinship to be the only all important conditions of any union, and you will have the commencement of a liberty that is worth something."

—Henrick Ibsen p. 273

[Henrick Ibsen—(1828-1906)—the great Norwegian dramatist acknowledged as the founder of modern prose drama His works have been translated and performed in many languages, especially English. —Eds.]

Oppression : "Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad." *(p. 278)*

[Source not known]*

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THE MARTYR'S NOTEBOOK

Page 22 (19)

Martyrs : The man who flings his whole life into an attempt, at the cost of his own life, to protest against the wrongs of his fellow-men, is a saint compared to the active and passive up-holders of cruelty and injustice, even if his protest destroys other lives besides his own Let him who is without sin in society cast the first stone at such an one '

(p. 287)*

*[*Source not known]*

Lower Class : While there is a lower class, I am in it.
While there is a criminal element. I am in it.
While there is a soul in jail, I am not free.

—Engene B. Debs (144)*

[Eugene Victor Debs (1855-1926) American socialist leader. Eds.] *[*Source not known]*

One Against All *(Charles Fourier : 1772-1837)*

The present social order is a ridiculous mechanism, in which portions of the whole are in conflict and acting against the whole. We see each class in society desire, from inerest, the misfortune of the other classes, placing in every way individual interest in opposition to public good. The lawyer wishes litigation and suits, particularly among the rich, the physician desires sickness. (The latter would be ruined if everbody died without disease, as would the farmer if all quarrels were settled by arbitration). The soldier wants a war, which will carry off half of his comrades and secure him promotion; the undertaker wants burials; monopolist and forestallers want famine. to double or treble the price of grain; the architect, the carpenter, the mason want canflagration, that will burn down a hundred houses to give activity to their branches of business

(p. 202.)*

[Francois Marie Charles Fourier (1772-1837) French socialist writer —Eds.] *[*Source of book not given]*

Page 23 : (20)

New Gospel : "Society can overlook murder, adultry or swindling; it never forgives the preaching of a new gospel."

(p. 327) Frederic Harrison

[Frederic Harrison (1831-1923) Professor of jurisprudence and international law to the Inns of Court (1877-89). Author of many books on historical, political and literary subjects. —Eds,]

Tree of Liberty : The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants. It is its natural manure.

Thomas Jefferson (332)*

[Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) a great liberal and American apostle of democracy, the third President of the United States of America. —Eds] *[*Source not known]*

Chicago Martyrs : Say, then, that the man erred grievously if his error had been ten times as great, it ought to have been wiped from human recollection by his sacrifice . . .

Granted freely that their idea of the best manner of making a protest was utterly wrong and impossible, granted that they went not the best way to work But what was it that drove them into attack against the social order as they found it ? They and thousands of other men that stood with them were not bad men, nor depraved, nor blood thirsty, nor hard hearted, nor criminal, nor selfish, nor crazy. Then what was it that evoked a complaint so bitter and deep seated....?

No one ever contemplated the simple fact that men do not band themselves tegether to make a protest without the belief that they have something to protest about, and that, in any organised state of society, a widespread protest is something for grave inquiry.

Charles Edward Russell (333)*

*[*Source not known. Identity not certain —Ed.]*

Page 24 : (21)

Will of Revolution "I also wish my friends to speak little or not at all about me, because idols are created when men are praised, and this is very bad for the future of the human race.... Acts alone, no matter by whom committed, ought to be studied, praised or blamed Let them be praised in order that they may be initiated when they see to contribute to the common weal; let them be censured when they are regarded as injurious to the general well-being, so that they may not be repeated.

"I desire that on no occasion, whether near or remote, nor for any reason whatsoever, shall demonstrations of a political or religions character be made before my remains, as I consider the time devoted to the dead would be better employed in improvi g the conditions of the living, most of whom stand in great need of this."

Will of Franscisco Ferrer

Spanish educator (1859-1909). Executed after the Barcelona riots by a plot of his clerical enemies.

[Francisco Ferrer Guardia (1859-1909). Spanish educationist turned socialist. Despite his opposition to violence, he was arrested, charged and executed in a trial which was later termed as judicial murder. —Eds.]

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THE MARTYR'S NOTEBOOK

Charity :

"Come follow me", said Jesus to the rich young man....To stay in his own set and invest his fortune in work of charity, would have been comparatively easy. Philanthropy has been fashionable in every age. Charity takes the insurreetionary edge off of poverty. Therefore, the philanthropic rich man is a benefactor to his fellow magnates, and is made to feel their gratitude, to him all doors of fashion swing. He denied the legitimacy of alms-giving as a plaster for the deep-lying sore in social tissue.... Philanthrory as a substitute or justiee—he would have none of it . . .

Page 25 (22)

Charity is twice cursed—it hardens him that gives and softens him that takes. It does more harm to the poor than exploitation, because it maks them willing to be exploited. It breeds slavishness which is moral suicide. The only thing Jesus would permit a swollen fortune to do was to give itself to revolutionary propaganda, in order that swollen fortunes might be forever after impossible....

Bouck White, Clergyman, born 1874, USA p. (353)*

*[Other details not available. —Eds.]

Fight for Freedom

The power of armies is a visible thing
Formal, and circumscribed in rime and space;
But who the limits of that power shall trace
Which a brave people into light can bring
Or hide, at will, —for freedom combating.

By just revenge inflamed ? No foot may chase,
No eye can follow, to a fatal place
That power that spirit whether on the wing
Like the strong wind, or sleeping like the wind
Within its awful caves—from year to year
Spring this indigenous produce far and near;
No craft this subtle element can bind.
Rising like water from the soil, to find
In every nook a lip that it may cheer

—W. Wordsworth

[William Wordsworth (1750-1850)—a popular English poet among the early Romantics and also a poet of nature, radical and pro-republican in his youth. -Ed]

Page 26 (23)

The Charge of the Light Brigade

Half a league half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

'Forward the Light Brigade !
Charge for the guns !' He said;
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

'Forward the Light Brigade !'
Was there a man dismayed ?
Not, though the soldiers knew
Some one had blundered :

Their's not to make reply,
Their's not to reason why,
Their's but to do and die;
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

Cannon to the right of them,
Cannon to the left of them,
Cannon in front of them,
Volleyed and thundered;

Stormed at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell,
Rode the six hundred.

Flashed all their sabres bare,
Flashed as they turned in air
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
All the world wondered :

Page 27 (24)

Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right through the line they broke,
Cossacks and Russians
Reeled from the sabre stroke
Shattered and sundered.

Cannon to the right of them.
Cannon to the left of them,
Cannon behind them
Volleyed and thundered;

Stormed at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell
They that had fought so well
Come through the jaws of Death,
Back from the mouth of Hell,
All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.

When can their glory fade ?
O the wild charge they made !
All the world wondered
Honour, the charge made
Honour, the Light Brigade !
All the world wondered,
Noble six hundred.

—Lord Tennyson

[Lord Alfred Tennyson (1809-1892) the famous English poet. More than one generation of Indian students must have read this poem in their books. Obviously, it had a deeper meaning for Bhagat Singh and his band of young revolutionaries who also rode into the Valley of Death ! Eds.]

(Continued)

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A SHORT STORY

Mulk Raj Anand

A Tiff Over The Tonsures

[With this short story by the veteran writer, we open a new feature in IBC. —Eds.]

The most important law suit of our history has recently been brought not before the Supreme Court, or any High Court, but before the Panchayat of the village of Trisula. In consequence, Lord Shiva, the deity of the holy *math* and temple of this outsized hamlet, is now threatened with a cut in His tonsorial revenue.

The devout, god-fearing section of the tonsorial brotherhood, otherwise known as the temple barbers, who have traditionally rendered their tribute to the Almighty, have appealed to the most democratic court of all, the local Panchayat, to bring some unholy rebels to their knees. And, of course, in this action, they have the full support of Lord Shiva's terrestrial representatives, the priests of the temple of Trisula. Thus the suit has been filed in the joint names of barbers of our hills and the Trisula Devasthan Mandal, the union of the holy priests against eleven unholy barbers, who have outrageously denied the claims of the Lord God to the hirsute tributes paid by devotees visiting the famous temple.

The facts are these : By agreement with the Brahmin trustees of the temple of Trisula, the holy barbers were long ago assigned the sole and executive right to perform the tonsure of the visiting pilgrims in the proportions ordained by the Lord, so that the tuftknot should keep its shape and form, and the areas around it might be well defined by the razor's edge. And, by virtue of this contract, out of every four annas derived from the revenue of the service to the pilgrims, three annas went to the priests in the Trisula Devasthan Mandal, half an anna to the holy temple itself, which is in the charge of the priests, and half an anna to the recognised holy barbers of the Trisula Mirasdar Sangham, who are adepts at creating the exact tonsure through hereditarily acquired skill.

The holy plaintiff claims that the shaven hair, which is offered as a tribute to the Lord by the pilgrims in fulfilment of vows made in moments of dire distress, rightly belongs to the temple. And that the holy priests of the Devasthan, and the holy barbers have the further right, from time to time, to auction the hair collected in the process of making the tonsure, so that those who are not blessed with adequate hirsute abundance, or have lost it through the incidences of modern civilisation, might be able to buy from the stall of the holy barbers, that is to say, Trisula Mirasdar Sangham, a wig or some false plaits The holy priests and the holy barbers have also shared the revenue derived from these sales.

Those being the traditional rights and practices of the guardians and servants of the shrine, the plaint before the Panchayat : That the defendants, the eleven outcaste barbers, 'fraudulently and dishonestly' induced devotees to come to their unholy 'Shaving and Hairdressing Saloons,' without any manner of right whatsoever, and without any divine or customary sanction, thus interfering with the plaintiff's legitimate, sole and exclusive rights. It alleged that the new 'Shaving and Hair-dressing Saloons' are solely intended for such fashion–loving' non–pilgrims, who have no tuftknots and who do not require a tonsure, because they never visit the temple.

In short, the plaintiffs contend that tufts, earmarked for Lord Shiva and his devoted priests and barbers, must of right be cut and tended by the holy barbers, members of the Trisula Mirasdar Sangham, and the shaven hair collected by them for sale in the form of wigs, to augment the dwindling revenue of the shrine; while the rebels should confine their activities to such hirsute growths as have to be removed for purposes of the new styles promoted by our erstwhile alien British rulers

The plaintiffs have also prayed to the Panchayat for a temporary injunction to prevent the loose unholy eleven from performing tonsorial operations to the heads of the bona fide pilgrims.

As the case is still subjudice, no comment can be offered.

(Reporduced from Dr. Mulk Raj Anand's book "Between Tears and Laughter" published by Sterling Publishers, New Delhi, 1991)

MARTYR'S NOTEBOOK (*Contd.*)

[Three couplets in Urdu on page 27 (24) of the Prison Notebook of Bhagat Singh are reproduced below in the Roman script, with a line by line free translation. —Eds.]

Dil de tu is mizaaj kaa Parvardigaar de !
Jo gham ki gharhi ko bhi khushi se guzaar de !

Tr (Give me a (stout) heart of that temperament
O ', Protector !
That it may pass the hour of sorrow also as a
happy hour !)

Chherh naa ai Farishte ! tu zikre-jaananaaan !
Kyon yaad dilaate ho bhulaa huaa afsaanaa !

Tr. (Do not start O' Angel with the mention of the
dear bloved !
Why must you remind (me) of that forgotten
episode (tale) ?)

Sajaa kar mayyiat-e-umeed naakaami ke phoolon se
Kisi hamdard ne rakh di mere toote hue dil mein.

Tr. (The bier of (my) hope, bedecked with the
flowers of failure—
Some fellow–sufferer (friend) has placed it in
my broken heart !.)

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REMEMBERING TAGORE: THE UNIVERSAL MAN

by Louella Lobo Prabhu

"I have had my invitation to this world's festival, and thus my life has been blessed. My eyes have seen and my ears have heard.

It was my part at this feast to play upon my instrument, and I have done all I could.

Now, I ask has the time come at last when I may go in and see thy face and offer thee my silent salutation?"

- Gitanjali (16)

"Sorrow's dark night, again and again
has come to my door.
Its only weapon, I saw,
was pain's crooked pretence;
fear's hideous gestures
preluding its deception in darkness.
WheneverI have believed in its mask of dread,
fruitless defeat has followed.
This game of defeat and victory in life's delusion;
from childhood, at each step, clings this spectre,
filled with sorrow's mockery."

• • •

(1941)

"The first day's Sun
asked
at the new manifestation of being–
Who are you?
No answer came.
Year after year went by,
the last Sun of the day
the last question utters
on the western seashore,
in the silent evening–
Who are you ?
He gets no answer.

The 50th death anniversary of Tagore took place in the first week of August.

At the same time,two items,commercial in their implications,appeared in the press. One,that an institution founded by him passed up the offer to buy his private papers,for Rs.1,00,000. These were subsequently bought by the Government for Rs.10 lakhs,using foreign exchange. The latter is irrelevant. No price is too great for acquisition of memorabilia concerning the nation's greatest modern bard: the universal man. That the first offer was turned down, is disquieting.

The other commercial item is the plea by Vishwabharathi Institute to continue as the sole users of "copyright". I cannot be said that this institution has done much to propagate Tagore studies, through wide availability of his publications. At a recent function in Mangalore, organised by the Head, English Department, M.V.Shetty Institute of Physiotherapy, I could not get Tagore biography in time for my presidential speech. Nor did any book-shop have any art volume of his paintings: the final Art he mastered. Vishwabharathi certainly needs to improve on its past track record as sole heirs of Tagore's copyright!

TAGORE'S IMPACT ON SPAIN & LATIN AMERICA

One aspect of Tagore's life, not generally known, which came to my notice, when reviewing Susnigadha Dey's book of Latin American literature was Tagore's extraordinary popularity in Spain, and Latin America: particularly his interaction with the poetess Victoria Ocampo, who went on to win her Nobel, herself. His work was also crucial to the poetic evolution of two other Latin Nobel winners: Octavio Paz, and Pablo Neruda, one of them getting his diplomatic post (when he was a government clerk) through the translation of a Tagore poem !

Yeats remains the best translator of Tagore's work. Like Fitgerald, his renderings, though not perhaps exact, make good English poetry. Current translations in unrhymed free verse, are false to a canon of Poetry, which in Tagore's day called for rhyme and metre. His untranslated work needs tobe re-done not as unstructured free verse, but in the Yeats mode.

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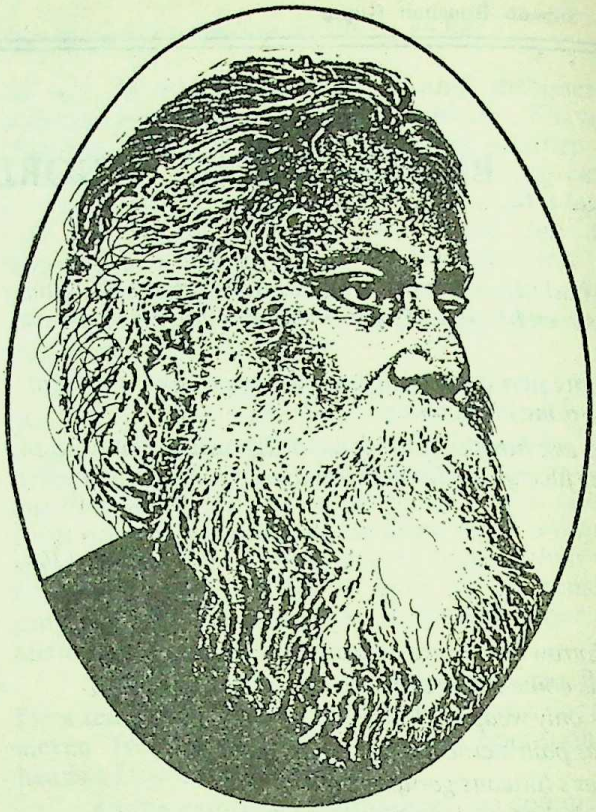

LEONARDO DA VINCI AND TAGORE

THE UNIVERSAL MEN OF THE WEST, AND THE EAST

Poem by – LOUELLA LOBO PRABHU.

Universal genius... Renaissance man,
Was Leonardo da Vinci we say,
For in the compass of just one life-span,
Over diverse disciplines he held sway.

India had her own Leonardo too –
His towering genius nurtured by Bengal:
To Tagore, Muses of the Arts, all flew –
Music, painting, poetry – most of all.

Majestic form; beard of snowy white;
Melodious voice which wove a magic spell --
His Nobel epic, "Gitanjali" - Light,
Along with which both Truth and Beauty dwell.

From him, comes our National Anthem sublime:
Which, with his classic works has conquered Time.

Mrs. Lonella Lobo Prabhu is a Mangalore – based poet, editor, publisher, piantist and music composer, compere and Radio-TV artiste, educationist and social worker – indeed a lady of verstalile talents.

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TOLSTOY & HIS WORKS – A Recent View from India

T.R. Sharma (Ed.) : ESSAYS ON LEO TOLSTOY
Shalabh Prakashan, Meerut (1989) pp. xlii + 269, Rs. 300/-

Review by Susheel Kumar Sharma

This is a collection of twentyone articles presented in a two-day seminar on Leo Tolstoy organized by the Department of English, Meerut University, Meerut. There is also a detailed introduction by the editor. Prof. T.R. Sharma traces the social, political and literary history of Russia since the early thirteenth century and also tries to make a comparison with what was then happening in other countries in Europe. He also gives a biographical sketch of Leo Tolstoy and mentions the various forces that shaped the mental make-up of the future litterateur and went into the making of his particular works.

Professor Massod ul Hassan, in his article 'Some Aspects of Tolstoyana in India' makes a bibliographical study of the translations of Tolstoy's works in India. His article sets forth that the book under review is a significant contribution to studies on Tolstoy. This is the only full-length published critical book on Tolstoy's works.

THE PARADOX & CONTRADICTIONS

In his article 'Tolstoy: The Last Phase – Regression into Utopia,' Dr. S.K. Vohra seeks to examine the Tolstoyan paradox – a mixture of historical greatness and childish simple-mindedness. According to Dr. Vohra, "utopian elements entered Tolstoy's realism in the last phase as a serious contradiction, when he attempted suggesting means to counter frustrations in personal life, repression and injustice – public" *(pp. 24-25)*.

Dr. Asha Vishwas quotes a great deal from Tolstoy's writings on religion in her article 'Tolstoy's Views on Christ and Christianity' to show that he had turned a sceptic, and criticized Church and its ways, and did not believe in the Bible as a gospel truth, because he judged them by his reason. She does not elaborate on the reasons of Tolstoy's conversion from faith to 'faith-lessness'. She concludes: "...Tolstoy has done a great service to humanity in pointing out the weaknesses and contradictions of the existing Churches... when he seems to be aiming at replacing the need of a church by his own 'Christianity', he moves on the wrong lines" *(p. 43.)*. The second part of her conclusion is unreasonable, because, once the contradictions and weaknesses of a religion have been pointed out,the alternative must be enunciated. Simply pointing out faults is meaningless, if some alternative is not suggested.

TOLSTOY AS A PEDAGOGUE & ART CRITIC

Dr.Saleem Ahmad in his article 'Tolstoy's Pedagogical Ideas' summarizes Tolstoy's ideas on several pedagogical issues like course curricula, methodology, examination, teacher-taught relationship,and nationalization of education.The real aim of education,according Tolstoy,is not merely to make the people literate, but to stir up their imagination,to make them more and more creative.Dr. Ahmad maintains that Tolstoy critised the then existing educational policies of the Russian government because of "his immense love and sympathy for the peasants and the down – trodden" *(p.46)*. Dr. Saleem, however, does not mention the practicability of Tolstoy's ideas for, like Milton, he himself failed as a teacher and an educationist.

Professor Harish Raizada summarizes Tolstoy's views of different works of art and artists, aesthetics and its allied issues in his article 'Tolstoy On Art and Artists'. According to professor Raizada, Tolstoy's unconventional views on art were a result of his (Tolstoy's) conversion into "a religious prophet" *(p.67)*

Professor M.H. Khan's 'Tolstoy's Critique of Shakespeare', is an attempt to find out the causes of Tolstoy's denigration of Shakespeare; and he quotes Orwell for his support. Professor Khan also attempts to put Tolstoy's criticism in the historical perspective in the gamut of continental literature, particularly criticism. He writes that "Tolstoy's attack on Shakespeare seems to belong with the sporadic, isolated and 'unprincipled' variety, that is a criticism arising from... Tolstoy's unconscious assimilation of the theory of the novel to the very different art of poetic drama" *(pp. 82-84)*. He further writes: "...Tolstoy's incomprehension of the source of Shakespeare's greatness proceeds from his inability to appreciate Shakespeare's poetics. The only difference, perhaps, between him and Shakespeare's admirers is that he indulges in downright condemnation of what he misapprehends, whereas Shakespeare's admirers gloss over, what in their hearts they rightly or wrongly believe to be, Shakespeare's inadequacies." *(pp. 87-88)*. Whatever Orwell might have said about Tolstoy's criticism of Shakespeare, Professor Khan will have to accept that Tolstoy as a critic is truly disinterested, as Arnold wants an ideal critic to be. Tolstoy's criticism cannot be dismissed easily.

OF DEATH... A SOURCE OF WISDOM

Dr. M.K. Chaudhri applies Joycean definition of epiphany to Tolstoy's fiction in his article 'Epiphany of Death in Tolstoy's Fiction' and illustrates how the great artist "uses death as the source of highest wisdom... to purify the inner man" *(p.100)* in his fiction

TOLSTOY: HIS ASSESSMENT AS A WRITER

In his article 'Virgina Woolf on Tolstoy' Prof.K.K. Sharma makes "an attempt at assimilating, interpreting and evaluating the numerous remarks Virginia Woolf has made about Leo Tolstoy as a fictionist in her writings with a view to evincing the fact that she has contributed most to assessing to him his rightful place in the realm of fiction," *(p.107)* which was denied to Tolstoy by earlier English critics and reviewers. Professor Sharma enlists the following merits of Tolstoy's fiction as enumerated by V.Woolf: wonderful element of familiarity in his writings; the element of spirituality; reflection and introspection; a mixed feeling of joy and fear which "most enthralls and most repels"; living characters with flesh and bones, with mind heart and soul creating God's plenty; his equal emphasis on the moments of 'being and those of 'nonbeing'; his convinicing and persuasive social criticism; and deliberate, painstaking

(Contd.)

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TOLSTOY

craftmanship. She also finds certain blemishes in Tolstoy's writings. Prof. K.K. Sharma enumerates them as follows: lack of humour; structural faults of some novels; too much of narration; and his misogynism. Though Professor Sharma denigrates Virginia Woolf's criticism saying that she "does not offer us a comprehensive critique of Tolstoy; as a matter of fact, her discussion of Tolstoy is only a record of her impressions about him" *(p.122)*; yet it enriches a reader's understanding of Tolstoy.

TOLSTOY & PREM CHAND

'Tolstoy and Prem Chand: A Comparative Study of Their Art and Vision' is a sketchy paper by Professor Mohammad Yassen. There is hardly any comparison of the two giants'art and vision; but only rudimentary statements here and there like "There is no denying the fact the range of Tolstoy's writings is wider and his insight deeper than that of Prem Chand" *(p.131)*. Professor Yassen seems to concentrate more on the social milieu of the two authors than on their literary work. He starts with a reference to their fiction, but soon turns to their circumstance. "A perusal of the major novels of Tolstoy and Prem Chand shows closer affinity between two masters. Both lived and wrote under the shadow of despotic regimes in their respective countries. Both evince profound knowledge of human nature and consciousness of historical, political and economic forces..." *(p.130-131)*.

Such examples are not uncommon throughout the paper.

COMMENTS ON HIS SEVERAL WORKS

FAMILY CHRONICLES IN THEIR HISTORICAL SOCIO-POLITICAL & PSYCHOSPIRITURAL CONTEXT

Of the three articles on epic *War and Peace*, the one by Professor T.R. Sharma the *'War and Peace:* A Three-Tier Study' enriches one's understanding of the magnum opus. He studies the novel on three planes: (i) as a family chronicle (ii) as a historical novel and (iii) as a psycho-spiritual study of men in given situation. In his piece 'Tolstoy's Vision of History in *War and Peace*', Mr. J.P. Savita analyses Tolstoy's theory of history reflected mainly in th Epilogues of the novel. If one can write one or two-sentence small paragraphs most ordinary in information about Tolstoy, his family life, his generation, his times, about fiction in general and the theme, characterization, symbols in *War and Peace,* that too most haphazardly, one can get a brief of Munthar Mohammad Habib's 'Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace:* A Re-Evaluation' *(sic)*.

There are two articles on *Anna Karenina.* Dr. Manorama B. Trikha in her 'Meaning Beyond Fixed Definition: Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina'* studies the novel on its three planes *viz.* family plane, against "socio-political norms... at various levels of society" *(p.169)* and as a reflection of the spiritual crisis of the contemporary society. Her thesis is that the novel attempts to seek new moral and religious canons. She concludes by saying: "Levin's message of 'goodness' lays the foundation of a new religion, that is not the religion of 'fixed definition'" *(p.179)*. Dr. Arun Kumar in his article 'Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina:* A Re-evaluation' does not indicate what he wants to re-evaluate, nor does he fix any norms and criterion for evaluation and re-evaluation, with the result that he concludes arbitrarily: "*Anna Karenina* remains his greatest novel" *(p.191)*.

Spiritualism in *Resurrection* has drawn the attention of two scholars. Dr. Naryan Sharma in his well-argued and well-illustrated article 'Eclipse and the Apoclypse in *Resurrection'* brings out meticulously that it is neither Nekhludov nor Maslova who is resurrected in the novel, but it is "a pious hope – a mere possibility" for every soul. Dr. Shrawan K. Sharma considers Nekhludov to be a spiritual quester but does not mention his "spiritual pride and vanity of righteousness" *(p.201)* as hinted at by Dr. Narayan Sharma. According to Dr. Shrawan, Nekhludov's spiritual quest ends when he "falls into a state of perfect satisfaction to which he has long been stranger and is turned, in the matter of minutes, aside, out, remorsed and cleansed" *(p.217)*, which in no case can be called perfect spiritual quest.

Professor R.S. Sharma's *'The Death of Ivan Ilyich*: A Study in Point of View' is a good piece of formalistic criticism. He works out the theoretical framework in the first part and applies it to Tolstoy's novella in the second part.

Professor Richard Dutt in his article 'Akim: The Patient Christ in *The Power of Darkness'* takes a part to be whole when he compares Akim and Christ. Even if Akim believes in 'pardon' and 'resist not evil', he cannot be termed 'patient Christ'. There is no imagery used by Tolstoy to this effect in the play.

In his 'Tolstoy the Crusader: A Study of *Master Man and Other Parables and Tales*', Mr. Subhash Chandra analyses the didactic element in eight short stories. Most of these stories centre round the christian idea that a camel may pass through the eye of a needle, but a rich man cnnot enter the gate of heaven. He argues that Tolstoy is envisaging a society with "humanness, selflessness, fellow-feeling, humility, love and compassion" *(p. 249)*.

... FOR MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Reshma Aquil's *'The Kreuter Sonata* and the Problem of Women and Marriage' touches upon the theme of female emancipation in the story. She concludes that for Tolstoy, the solution for social evils and all sorts of double standards lies in 'moral development of individuals' *(p.255.)*.

Professor V.G. Budai's 'L.N.Tolstoy and M.K. Gandhi: The Two Great Souls of Mankind' adds nothing new to enlighten a reader who has gone through *Traditions of Great Friendship* (Moscow: Raduga, 1985)

The printing of the book is clear though there are some misprints also: 'Eugenii' in place of 'Eugene' *(p.ix)*, 'aave' in place of 'have' (p.37), 'regigions' in place of religious' *(p.67)*, to mention a few. The book provides a sumptuous intellectual feast but it is likely to be out of reach of many because of its high price.

Dr. Susheel Kumar Sharma is Assistant Professor of English, CBSH, G.B. Pant University, Pantnagar. (U.P).

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WHAT TO DO ABOUT HUNGER?

Jean Dreze and Amartya Sen
HUNGER AND PUBLIC ACTION

Clarendon Press, Oxford; 1989. pp. 373. Price: Rs. 275/-

Review by Jandhyala B.G. Tilak

In his *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation* (Oxford University Press, 1981), Amartya Sen analysed the causal mechanism of starvation in general, and of famines in particular, concentrating on the Great Bengal famine (1943), the Ethiopian famine (1973-74), the Bangladesh famine (1974), and famines in African countries. Sen has not only shown that attempts to explain famines in terms of food supply were defective, but also that famines could occur even when the food supply was at its peak. He has argued that 'entitlements' explain the phenomenon of starvation.

CHRONIC HUNGER: FOUR ASPECTS

Poverty and Famines forms a necessary starting point of the present study under review. Rather, the book begins from where the earlier study ends. In the present book, one of the first results of programme of 'research for action' on Hunger and Poverty of the World Institute for Development Economic Research (WIDER), Sen extends his research on famines to a wider framework of hunger, as chronic hunger takes more lives than vast famines. For example, every eight years or so, more people are found to die in India, because of its higher regular death rate (attributable to hunger and under-nutrition) than died in China in the gigantic famine of 1958-61 *(pp.215-16)*.

The most important question Dreze and Sen are concerned with in the present study is: What is the role of the 'public' action in reducing hunger? Public action, according to them, includes not only State action, but also social actions taken by members of the public. 'Public' is not merely 'the patient' whose well-being commands attention, but also it is 'the agents' whose actions can transform society *(p.279)*.

The massive research evidence is organised in four major parts of the book. The first part analyses serveral factors—economic, social (including class and gender), political and health (medical)-- relating to hunger in the modern world. Drawing from the experiences on famines in several countries, the second part discusses the strategies to prevent famines-- social and state actions, market mechanism and familial practices (e.g., discrimination aganinst women within families, etc.)

Part III analyses the role of food supply, economic growth, and state's direct support systems in reducing undernutrition and deprivation. A comparative analysis of the state policies of the communist China and the socialistic democratic India, and also of other countries like Sri Lanka, Chile and Costa Rica in chapters 11 and 12 provides lots of very useful and rare insights into the effectiveness of state policies. The concluding part (the last chapter) presents an overall view of the need for increased state action to prevent hunger.

PLEA FOR PUBLIC ACTION

A few major themes dominate the whole book and run throughout. The authors' faith in state action is one such theme. In the concluding chapter, the authors ask the question: "Is this not a hopeless time to write in defence of public action?" They continue, "The world has, in recent years, moved decisively towards unhesitating admiration of private enterprise and towards eulogizing and advocating reliance on the market mechanism... The 'heroes' of this moment are the private ownership economies..." *(p.257)*. This is more true today in 1991 than in 1989 when the book was published. The authors show very impressively how state action in India and in African countries prevented famines, and how easy it is to exterminate famines with public support. If one puts aside for a moment ideologies and look at the massive evidence presented here, one has to nod his (or her) head approvingly of the arguments made in favour of state action.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION & BASIC HEALTH CARE

The second important theme the authors stress throughout is the importance of education, particularly elementary education, and health care, primary or basic health care, in particular, among the public support programmes. For example, on education they argue: Education has a major role in the eradication of both under-nourishment and preventable morbidity. This is not merely because education helps in the use of one's personal means to buy food and medicine in a more informed way, but also because widespread elementary education leads to greater utilization of public health services. It can also generate more effective political demand that such services be provided. Furthermore, an educated public can more easily participate in national economic growth-- partly through the expansion of remunerative employment -- making the fruits of growth more widely shared.All this is in addition to the part that education directly plays in making human lives more worthwhile through broadening one's horizon of thought and experience" *(p.267)*. In short, "Education is not only of direct importance to living *(e.g.,* in broadening a person's horizon of perception and thought), it can also influence the conversion of other entitlements into human abilities (e.g., the conversion of incomes into nutritional capabilties). *(p.262)*.

ECONOMIC GROWTH & QUALITY OF LIFE

Alongwith, another aspect comes out significantly: economic growth, particularly GNP per head, cannot necessarily ensure better quality of life, and prevention of hunger and famines. "Improvements in the quality of life are sometimes seen simply as the result of increases in overall affluence *per se*, when in fact, the expansion of public support may have been the crucial intermediator." *(p.181)*. The authors categorically state: "Income is a rather dubious indicator of the opportunity of being well-nourished and having nutrition-related capabilities" *(p.179)*.

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WHITHER PUBLIC SECTOR?

R.C. Dutt : STATE ENTREPRISES IN A DEVELOPING COUNTRY *Abhinav Publications (1990) pp.202*

Review by M.L. Mishra

This volume on State Enterprises has come out at a time when the public sector in India is under attack from many directions, and suggestions for Privatisation are advocated and being put into practice.

The author R.C. Dutt,a senior retired civil servant, has had a rich and vast experience in many offices of responsibility as CEO of National Coal Development, Director General, Bureau of Public Enterprises and Secretary to GOI dealing with important undertakings such as Air India, Indian Airlines, Hindustan Steel and Heavy Engineering Corporation.

His motivation is to analyse the ideological origins of public enterprises and the changing attitudes towards them under the influence of the private sector. This book is in countinuity of his other writings on Indian socialism.

THE REAL CHOICE – WHAT TYPE OF SOCIETY WE WANT ?

The author is convinced that there is nothing inherent in the public enterprises that place them professionally or operationally at a disadvantage compared to the private enterprise. He comes to a definite conclusion that "the real choice between the two sectors should be based on the means adopted to achieve the end, namely the type of society sought to be created". He is of the firm opinion that the importance of public enterprises lies in the fact that they alone, and not the private enterprises guided by the profit motive, can serve the vehicle o such a plan"-i.e. for building a cooperative as against acquisitive type of society. This conviction gives special value to the work, as public sector is discounted these days be planners academicians and social elites with a louder voice than before.

The book is divided into three parts. The first part gives a historical and social background of state enterprises in India starting with the impact of the Russian Revolution and a comparative working of the free enterprise economy.

He takes a leaf from the latest trends in Soviet economy and explains how "*Perestroika* amounts to a call for a national initiative on the part of the Soviet people to arrest stagnation of the economy". The movement means the lesson that, besides planning and public sector, success depends on how these instruments are used. Over – centralisation must be guarded against. Thus, as against profit-oriented, acquisitive economies, socialist economies show the right direction, if flexible and dynamic approach is used.

INDIAN THEORY OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & ITS OUTFALL

A history of socialist approach as envisged by Indian leadership is traced; various Indian thoughts and opinions on planning summarised and Nehru's contribution to the theory of economic development are identified. These thoughts were put into practice through the first three plans of Nehru era. While a "foundation was laid for the growth of diversified industries", the tendency toward accumulation of the national wealth with big businessmen and farmers led to inequitable distribution of wealth. The greatest failure was" failure to create mass consciousness" in favour of a "socialistic pattern of society", which was the objective of State policy. With the growth of private sector, the national bourgeoisie were in a better position to assert themselves than they were immediately after independence. Besides, the post- Nehru ruling groups had no commitment to socialism, and no socialist leadership emerged to take Nehru's place.

During the brief Janata regime, rural bias to economic development increased. Subsidies on rural inputs mounted substantially. Role of public sector declined; and targets for investment in private sector were set higher. Rural bias favoured the rich rural sector. The return of the Congress to power saw a weakening of plan controls and the birth of an 'open economy' under I.M.F. pressures, with emphasis on liberalisation of imports, free access to foreign capital and role of market forces in economic development. The Rajiv regime had just rhetoric adherance to socialism while new concepts like 'high technology' and 'leap into the twenty – first century' dominated the policy utterances. This just created contradictions and lacked in socialistic conciousness among policy framers and development administrators alike.

BASIC OBJECTIVES

PROBLEMS & SOME REMEDIES

Part two deals with the basic objectives of public enterprises, the anxiety about controlling the rising concentration of assets holding, a gradual indifference to taking this sector to 'commanding heights' and continuous rise in the concentration of wealth and assests. The impetus to industrial and technical self-reliance was gradually lost by import practices, and entry of foreign business units in the economy. While the public sector units could not add to resources for economic development, "the industrial growth... and potential for further growth would not have been possible, had the public enterprises not laid a solid foundation for it".

Problems of public enterprises have been identified and grouped, For examples, the public enterprises were expected just to break even and function as "model employers" who have to follow much higher norms of employees' welfare as against private sector. There were changes in the perspective of planning, resulting in heavy losses of some units (for instance, global tenders and bilateral loan agreements had adverse impact on idigenous production). The influence of the State in granting autonomy or demanding autonomy oriented by dominant groups (as in case of over-manning) and lack of manpower development plans were some other aspects. All these problems have affected the efficiency of public enterprises. Main problems, however, arise "from their day-to-day relationship with government".

The author suggests a few remedies.. Autonomy and accountablity are both crucial for effectiveness of enterprises. State control on Replacement from Deprecia-

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tion Fund, price controls, and day- to-day interferences must go, while public enterprises should be run in alignment with planning. A Public Enterprises Commission, analogous to UPSC should be set up with divisions like Personnel, Finance, Project Construction and Technical to assist the planning and parliamentry institutions and maintain autonomy and accountablity.

WHAT IS THE ALTERNATIVE ?

Part III deals with the alternative, the Choice and Prospects. India adopted the socialist path for capital accumulation as income and savings were thin. Surplus from state enterprises and fiscal measures were the main resources for investment and redistribution. However, the interplay of social forces led to an abandonment of this path, greater reliance on market forces and private enterprises, as also a consumerist craze, resulting in the "resources crunch" for essential investments. Self-reliance was at a discount and technological collaborations multiplied. Consumerism and poor savings have forced the country to go in for foreign debt for mere survival. Problems of industrial 'sickness' and dual economy have aggravated the situation.

The author emphasises that the alternative to planned economy is seen in 'liberalization'. This is eulogised by quoting the cases of Hongkong, Taiwan or Korea, but it must be seen also through the experience of the Latin American countries which followed the IMF/World Bank model or style of development. The lesson is that the alternative to planned development in private enterprise and market economy has other consquences like exploitation of working class, catering to affluent sections of society, consumerism, poor savings and lack of self-reliant economy. In India, the recent trends in lowering of moral or social values and rise of consumerism have created an 'acquisitive' rather than a cooperative society. Results: Corruption, black marketing and terrorism.

Socialism envisages a principled distribution of Wealth and Income, as against unplanned market mechanism. Mere dominance of investment does not make a state 'socialist'. In India, the dominant social force in the society is made up of the industrial bourgeoisie, rural landowners, professionals, tradesmen, employees and even organised working class. This 10 per cent of population is most articulate. The economy is geared to meet demands of this group. Even the public sector and public investments are oriented to the demands of this group.

In fact, socialism as an ideology is now discredited and public sector subserves the interests of private sector. The choice between the public sector and private sector must not be based on their relative operational efficiency, but on the possible consquences of the two, and the latter should not consider only economic factors, but moral atmosphere as well.

BALANCED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT WITH LONG-TERM PLANNING

To the author, many of the present distrubances and uprisings are rooted in economic discontent and grievances. The urge for 'growth with social justice' is no longer felt. The prospects are that diverse outlooks and conflicting interests may result in perpectual strife among groups with a weakened centre. Even Panchayat Raj may fail to resolve basic contradictions of society.

The basic problem is balanced economic development of all sections and not petty conflicts, and this consciousness is important for a new development approach. For this end, both long-term planning and public enterprises have a role to play. A long-term approach alone would inspire those engaged in public enterprises and contribute to India's integrity and to the vision of a just society.

The book is in fact, a treatise on "Whither Indian Socialism?" The analysis emphasizes on the objectives of public enterprises and national conviction which influenced the pattern of national economy,resource allocation and distributional justice.

While long-term policies have an impact on operational efficiency and achievement of objectives, it is a fact that most of the "under-developed" countries are really "under managed" countries. The role of the bureaucracy and impoverished management of the public enterprises in too significant to be omitted in such a volume.

Professor Bhabatosh Datta's comments in the foreword are enlightening when he says "The argument about commanding heights in still valid", and many cases need to be examined industry by industry and our "most important objective should be productive efficiency...". Let us hope we get further case by case analysis from this wise and erudite writer.

Dr. M.L. Mishra, a visiting Professor based at Indore, has been formerly Director, Podar Instt. of Management Studies in the University of Rajasthan, as also P.G. Head, Deptt. of Econ. Adm. & Fin. Mgmt., Head Deptt of Econ. Mgmt. University of Sokoto, Nigeria and Director, IMS Bikaner, India.

Perhaps IBC readers may like to carry on the debate.

- Ed.

(Continued from page 5)

WHAT TO DO ABOUT HUNGER?

The voluminous indepth research is put in an extremely readable, simple, non-technical, and scholarly style with carefully analysed facts and figures. The critical review presented here of the vast international experience on prevention of famines would be extremely useful to economic and social policy makers around the world. The 77-page bibliography given at the end shows the amount of literature surveyed by Dreze and Sen. This is indeed a feast to the researchers in the field. The photograph by Santanu Mitra on the cover-a female child beggar outside the Rastrapati Bhawan-describes most aptly the contents of the book.

Dr. Jandhyala B.G. Tilak is senior fellow and Head of the Education Finance Unit in the National Institute of Educational Planning & Administration, New Delhi

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CAPITALISM, DEVELOPMENT AND INDIA

Ghanshyam Shah (Ed.)

CAPITALIST DEVELOPMENT:CRITICAL ESSAYS

Popular Prakashan, Bombay (1990) pp.411; Rs. 450/-

Review by Arun Bose

What is capitalism? What is development? To what extent and how has there been and/or is there capitalist development in India?

No reader will find *one* answer (or *any* straight answer) to such innocent questions in this 400-page volume of 22 essays written in honour of Professor A.R.Desai. Even though Desai has been insisting, at least since the 1940's, that India *is* capitalist and *not*, as most Marxists have believed insofar as they have any clear ideas on the question, that her problem is that she is not, or that she is not capitalist enough. Indeed, at least one contributor, Dipankar Gupta is probably convinced that the problem is not that such questions are not answered, but that they are asked.

ON MODE OF PRODUCTION & RELATIONS OF PRODUCTION/ EXPLOITATION

Of course, Ashok Rudra's opening piece seductively entitled Indian Capitalism and Marxist Theory raises hopes, comes close to such questions, like some other contributions, but then stops short. He extends his well-known argument against the inter- systemic generic concept of 'mode of production' bandied about by Marxists, but says very little about capitalism in general or Indian capitalism in particular. He does make out a convincing case for discarding this concept altogether. But what does he put in its place? He says on *p.24*: "To understand historical processes, what is crucially important is the relations of production in general and the relations of exploitation in particular". How does this square with his statement on *p. 25:* "The task before Marxists is to understand the dynamic present in Indian society from a meticulous study of the process of its development, using the instruments of analysis of interaction between forces of production and relations of production, between base and superstructure, class war, the special importance of such typically Indian institutions as the caste system and the overwhelming influence of Brahmanic ideology"?

Perhaps Rudra would clarify that all these interactions matter, but production relations are *always* crucially important. This is, of course, a testable hypothesis; but so is the hypothesis that in some space-time contexts, production relations are 'crucial', but at others some of the other interaction are. Besides, Marx did say, in the standard reference of his preface to an introduction to a *Critique of Political Economy* that 'production relations' are synonymous with ("or what is the same thing...") 'property relations'. Does the terminology of 'property relations' or 'property rights' have the advantage of referring to relations between economic actors not only in production proper, but also in circulation or trade which, as Marx rightly stressed in Grundrisse, is always 'organically linked' with production?

Finally, Rudra seems to believe that what is relevant is the 'dominant' set of production relations under capitalism *(p.24)*, implying that there is always (or sometimes) a multiplicity of production or property relations. This is an important idea. But Marx and Marxists use the terms 'dominant mode' or 'dominant production relations' very loosely. It is a pity Rudra does not elaborate what he himself means when he refers to capitalism as the 'dominant production relations' in contemporary India, or at least recognise that this is a problem which his corrected version of the Marxian understanding has to solve (or that he has solved it elsewhere in his writings).

On the whole, however, this book is long on facts and short on concepts and theory. The facts cited are as dependable as official and semi-official statistics usually are. Unfortunately, facts cited in this volume do not always make the point they are supposed to make. On *p.224*, there is a table on central government subsidies which are supposed to prove that the 'lion's share of total state subsidies has... gone to agriculture'. But it proves the point only if we assume that the entire subsidy, both on food and fertilisers, benefits only agriculture. Do not traders also benefit? What proportions of fertilisers are produced in agriculture and in industry respectively? Do not subsidies to fertilisers produced in industry benefit both agriculture and industry?

ON THE CONCEPT OF CLASS

With the theoretical statements made in this book, there are sometimes problems of a different kind. On *p. 384* Gail Omvedt and Bharat Patankar make the eye-catching statement that "one should recognise that 'class' is not a fundamental concept of Marxism, it is a derived and secondary concept". The latter half of the statement is true, though it requires elaboration, but the first half? Now it turns out that all that the authors meant was that "It is difficult (in India) to speak of 'classes' or 'class struggle' unless we use a very broad definition of class (as the exploited versus the exploiters)" *(p. 385)*. But this is precisely how Marx defines classes: in terms of exploitation involving the extraction of a material surplus in production. So, for Marx, exploitation understood in this way is the *primary* concept, from which class *is* derived as a derived or secondary concept. The sentence, corrected to read 'primary' for 'fundamental', would be beyond dispute. But to say class is 'not fundamental' suggests that Marxian social theory could be rewritten without the concept of class, which is hard to accept, and is not what the authors wanted to suggest.

DEVELOPMENT & VIOLENCE : ETHNIC OR COMMUNAL AND CLASS FORMS

Again, Ashgar Ali Engineer, in a promising attempt at a systematic analysis of capitalist development and ethnic and communal conflicts in South Asia, reaches the hard-headedly realistic, if gloomy, conclusion that "development and violence appear to be inevitable" *(p. 376)*. But the analysis is marred by his coupling together two hypotheses which are unnecessarily collapsed into one "... if develop-

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ment takes place in a capitalist framework, the violence assumed an ethnic and communal form, but if it takes place in a socialist framework, it assumes a class form" *(p. 373)*. Of course, the stark black-and-white contrast is toned down, when it is clarified in a footnote tht the author 'is speaking only of *dominant* trends'; both types of violence are found in both frame-works. Insofar as the reference is to capitalist frame-works in South Asia, the statement it almost certainly empirically verified: the toll of communal, ethnic and inter-caste violence together at least since 1947 has been greater than the tool of class-violence. This needed saying, however unpalatable it may be to Marxists who have sometimes hoped that 'communal violence could be drowned in class violence". But the coupling of this hypothesis with the contrasting hypothesis about class violence in a socialist frame- work is not only unnecessary, but also confusing, since the author conceded that both types of violence feature in both types of societies.

NATURE OF STATE

Before I conclude this review of an interesting volume, let me draw the reader's attention to four especially interesting features of the contents.

First, there is at least one contribution by Dipankar Gupta which puts forward a challenging off-beat idea about the nature of the state under any kind of capitalism. On *p. 175*, we find him saying, "It is important now, as it was ever before, to *abandon attempts* to theorize on the capitalist state and to take up, instead, each state or government and *expose* it, pierce its ideological veils, and shatter its shibboleths" *(my italics)*. Of course, such 'exposure' and 'piercing of ideological veils' etc are *also* a kind of theorizing, of the 'unrestricted criticism' variety, which Marx too intended to, but did not often, in fact, practice. It always leads to a (provisional) theoretical conclusion. What is the conclusion in this case? A most interesting one, spelt out on *pp.172* and *182* as prescribing a kind of activism focused on the 'relative anarchy' of the shortest of short durations as against the longest of long durations or the *longue duree* currently in vogue among some Marx-oriented historians.

INDIA AND INTERNATIONAL MERCHANT CAPITALISM

Second, there is a statement on *p.43* by David Hardiman about the relation between (a part of) India and 'international merchant capitalism', which is most unusual and ought to be discussed seriously, whether or not one agrees with Braudel in identifying a period in whcih there was dominant, what he called, 'international merchant capitalism'. The statement reads: "Thus Gujarat, once a leading, perhaps *the* leading, centre for international merchant capitalism, became a backward region *(italics mine)*". Indeed ? Adam Smith, we know, did extol the advancement of Bengal as compared to the backwardness of Europe in pre-British times. But if the little known historical data about Gujarat to which Hardiman has drawn attention *does* support his conclusion, our understanding of India's pre-British economy will have to be drastically revised. But, a more comprehensive *comparative* study of the historical data about other centres of merchant capital (in particular in West Asia and Europe) will have to be undertaken to convince the sceptics.

LAW & LEGAL ACTION IN INDIA 'AN AUTHORITARIAN DEMOCRACY'

Third, no less than four contributions (by Upendra Baxi, Rajni Kothari, Jan Bremen and Achin Vanaik) are about law, legal action, terror etc. under the Indian state, culminating in the serious characterisation of the contemporary Indian state as 'an authoritarian democracy'. Terminologically the polar opposite of (or is it?) Dipankar Gupta's label of 'relative anarchy', here is a characterisation which ought to be seriously discussed (and not merely passed over as a piece of rhetoric not to be taken literally).

DUALITY IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS

Fourth, not only the piece just cited, but others may give a reader the impression that there is no hope at all, a total, impenetrable darkness in the Indian landscape. But it is worth noting that not only Aditya Mukherjee and Mridula Mukherjee in their piece, but also Manoranjan Mohanty underline what Mohanty articulates theoretically as 'duality (in) the Indian political process... (which) also presents opportunities for the challengers to the existing system to struggle for transformation of this order" *(p.151)*. Rajni Kothari also affirms, albeit without any elaboration at all in the rest of his article, that "democratic politics... is by no means defeated and continues to offer resistance to the dominant classes and their capitalist and technocratic allies".

RULE OF LAW & REIGN OF TERROR

Upendra Baxi writes out a devastating indictment of the way in which "The Indian state skillfully combines both the rule of law and reign of terror into the hegemonic tasks and apparatuses of governance" *(p. 185)*. He expounds a doctrine of "surplus repression" *(p.199)* to refer to "those brutal practices of power which do severe and unjustified aggression and harm to individuals or groups by agents of the state...(so that there is) use of excessive force not justifiable by principles of legality or legitimay" *(p.199)*.

But even Baxi does not seem to say, one must abandon all hope, as when entering Dante's Inferno. For he says on *p.196*, "The state and the law have to negotiate the contradictions between the indigenous capitalist classes and foreign capital and the contradictions between the political imperatives of national sovereignty and the foreign economic policies promoted both through the instruments of foreign aid and debt as well as the multinationals... (so that) in the near future, the relative autonomy of the judiciary offers the best site for negotiations and renegotiation of these contradictions... This appreciation is ... writ large in the ruling 'class' approaches to the problem of structuring independence – independence of the adjudicative power".

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We invite more comments and reviews on books of similar themes. **- Ed.**

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What Does Sardar Sarovar Project Promise ?

Mahesh T. Pathak (Ed.): SARDAR SAROVAR PROJECT: *A PROMISE FOR PLENTY*
Oxford & IBH Publishig Company, Calcutta, (1991)
pages xv + 113-Rs. 75.00/-

Review by Subhash Chandra Sarker

The Sardar Sarvoar Project has not only raised a lot of controversy but it has also been subjected to a lot of calumny, by persons who perhaps have no business to criticise the project. It is refreshing to find Dr. Yoginder Alagh pinning down Baba Amte for his not very helpful and unduly critical stand. Prof. Alagh, in his foreword to the book, states "Baba Amte, one of its (Sardar Sarovar Project's) critics, has kept up the fiction that the project is a secret. I had sent him details and published references and to nail this lie, the National Planning Group has published the Plan in a 565 page printed book-Narmada Planning Group, *Planning for Prosperity: Sardar Sorovar Development Plan,* Gandhinagar, NPG 1989." If for nothing else, the book under review has to be welcomed for only this particular statement of Dr. Alagh. People who criticise governments, without having any warrant to do so, are successful in this country to build up a false image of greatness around themselves, inasmuch as the government in this country is extremely secretive and never allows truth to come out unless it is forced to do so. This dubious conduct on the part of persons outside the Government only adds to the woes of the common man. But this book is most welcome on the ground of providing dependable information for the education of the general public.

The book is a collection of five articles contributed by the authors on the basis of Sardar Sarovar Development Plan as it was formulated in 1982. The contributors are Mr. S.S. Mehta, (Professor, Gandhi Labour Institute, Mem-Nagar, Ahmedabad); Mr. B.N. Viswanath, (Professor, Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology, Ahmedabad); Mr. Vidyut Joshi, (Professor, Gandhi Labour Institute, Ahmedabad) and Mr. B.V. Patel, (Professor of the same institute); Mr. V.M. Patel, (Former Director, Perspective Planning, Government of Gujarat and now Adviser to Narmada Planning Group, Gandhinagar) apart from a foreword by Prof. Alagh, former Member of the Planning commission and now with Sardar Patel Institute of Economic and Social Research, Ahmedabad, to which a reference has already been made earlier in this article. The editor of the volume is Mr. Mahesh P. Pathak, Executive Member, Narmada Planning Group, Gandhinagar.

WIDELY DISCUSSED & STRONG DATA BASE

The Sardar Sarovar Project has also been more widely discussed over a longer period of time than any other hydro project in this country as Mr. S.S.Mehta states in his article. The project is also one of the most extensively studied. Its data base is perhaps one of the strongest. All possible technological and socio-economic data have been collected on this project. The technological and economic planning of this project has been fully intergrated. Normally only technological studies are carried out in an irrigation project, but in this case, not merely the technological studies and planning have been carried out but they have also been fully matched with socio-economic studies. Thus the project can be classified as one of the few projects where the planning has been most elaborate on every aspect. For the first time, the problem of rehabilitation and its planning have been worked out before initiating the project. The environmental aspect has also been taken care, Mr. Mehta writes.

ENVIRONMENTAL & REHABILITATION ASPECTS

Mr. B.N. Viswanath discusses environmental perceptions in the irrigation projects and examines the Sardar Sarovar Project in this light. He notes that favourable and unfavourable impacts have been weighed for a preliminary impact analysis *(page 44)*. According to him, no parcel of land would be allowed to be waterlogged *(page. 45)*. "In its wider perspective, the project, as a whole, tries too look towards a sustainable development of the area instead of merely pegging its horizons on the cost-benefit parameter or merely on short-term environment preservation of the area or only meeting the present human needs of the area in question," writes Mr. B.N. Viswanath *(page 46)*.

Mr. Vidyut Joshi in the article "Rehabilitation on Sardar Sarovar Narmada Project," states that an amount of Rs. 316 crores has been provided by the Government of Gujarat for rehabilitation, out of which Rs. 264 crores would be spent for the rehabilitation of those displaced in Madhya Pradesh, Rs. 24 crores for those displaced in Maharashtra and Rs. 28 crores for those displaced within Gujarat. The allocation comes to Rs. 2.5 lakhs per family. Rehabilitation, however, is not merely a task of financial allocation or simple administration." *(page. 49)*

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Mr. D.B. Patel discusses the aspect of social justice with special reference to the benefits expected to be derived by those living in drought-prone and socio-economic backward areas in the Command Area of Sardar Sarovar Project. The implementation of the project would also be a boon for 2,650 village in Saurashtra for their needs of drinking water. It might also lead to a reduction in the distress migration of persons from that area.

COST BENEFITS

Mr. V.M. Patel discusses the benefit-cost analyis of the Sardar Sarovar Project. The project cost of Sardar Sarovar Project was finalised at Rs. 4,887 crores at 1981-82 prices. However, the delay in the construction of the project is undoubtedly going to increase the size of investment.

On the completion of the project as planned, Sardar Sarovar (Narmada) Project will become the largest irrigation system of the world.

LONG IN THE PIPE-LINE

It took 42 years, from 1946 to 1988, for the idea of the Sardar Sarovar Project to get final government clearance as a project. It is thus not correct to 'condemn it, as its critics have done, as a hasty idea. Of course, the great time

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lag between the conception of an idea and the governmental approval to it in the form of the project is not by itself proof that it is wisely conceived and implemeted. Indeed such a question arises because of the factual criticism of the details of the project by varions critics. While vilification of governmental enterprise by groups, many financed from abroad, cannot be the basis for rejecting a project, serious factual criticism has to be welcomed and taken into acound–more so, because the government in this country is often accused of being so secretive in all matters. It is strange, to say the least, that the Government of Gujarat should have imposed the Official Secrets Act on 12 villages in October 1988, as that Government did in fact. Such a conduct on the part of officialdom automatically make the governmental enterprises, sought to be upheld in this manner, highly suspect in the public eye.

It is also remarkable (?) that the book under review is based on facts as they obtained in 1982, while the publication date is 1991... almost a decade later. Has the projcet remained unchanged all these years? Do the studies contained in this book give an idea of the changes that have been introduced to the projcet formulation, despite the statement of the editor. Mahesh T. Pathak, that there have been changes, which he chooses to describe as "certain marginal modifications in the target dates for flow of benefits"? To the extent that the project itself is justified for its capacity to provide benefits to the people, a modification of the target dates for flow of benefits cannot be described as "marginal".

BRIEF HISTORY – NAVGAM DAM

In 1959, the Central Water and Power Commission had submitted a project proposal for consideration to the then Bombay Government (which included parts of present-day Maharashtra and Gujarat States). The Navagam dam which has come to be known as Sardar Sarovar Project,was conceived to be built in two stages. In stage 1, the full reservoir level (FRL) was restricted to 160 feet, with provision for certain works which would later enable the dam to be raised/used to FRL 300 feet in stage 2. In the same year, a panel of consultants was appointed by the Ministry of Power and Irrigation to consider the Broach Irrigation Project, that is the Navagam Dam. The report of the consultants submitted in April 1960, included two important recommendations: One was that the dam should be built and rasised to its final FRL to 320 feet in *one stage only*. In August 1960, the Planning Commission sanctioned stage 1 of the dam with FRL 162 feet, with provision for raising the dam to FRL 320 feet later on.

The stage 1 project was only an irrigation project whereas stage 2 envisaged the production of hydroelectricity of 625 MW of power at 60 per cent plant load factor (PLF).

After the inauguration of the Navagam (Sardar Sarovar) Project by the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru, in April 1961, the Gujarat Government decided to raise the height of Navagam dam to FRL above 460 feet. In November 1963, it was decided by the Central Government and the Governments of Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh that the Navagam dam (Sadar Sarovar Project) should be built up to FRL 425 feet, and the entire benefits should be enjoyed by the State of Gujarat and the Punasa dam should be built up to full reservoir level (FRL) of 850 feet. The cost and power benefits of the Punasa (Narmada Sagar) Power Project should be shared in the ratio of 1:2 between Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. Of the power allotted to Madhya Pradesh, half should be given to Maharashtra for a period of 25 years. In return, Maharashtra would provide a loan to the extent of one third of the cost of the Punasa dam.

The Bargi project was to be implemented by Madhya Pradesh. Bargi stage 1 would be up to FRL 1365 feet. The Governments of Gujarat and Maharashtra would provide Rs.10 crore loan for this project.

GOVERNMENTS DIFFER AND AGREE

The Government of Madhya Pradesh, however, argued that the Navagam dam should be restricted to FRL 162 feet, since that was the bed level on the Madhya Pradesh border. But the Government of Gujarat ratified the decision on 30 November, 1963 and submitted a report on this basis to the Planning Commission in February 1964 envisaging the Navagam dam as having a height of FRL 425 feet.

To resolve this difference, a high level committee was appointed in September 1964 with Dr. A.N. Khosla as chairman. The Khosla Committee submitted its report in September 1965 recommending 13 projects: Rosra, Basanta, Burhner, Bargi, Chinki, Sitarewa, Barna, Hoshangabad, Tawa, Kolar, Narmada Sagar and Omkareshwar (Barwaha) in Madhya Pradesh and Navagam in Gujarat. The Khosla Committee suggested that the height of the Navagam project should be 500 feet. The Khosla Committee for the first time mentioned that water should be allocated to Rajasthan also. The Khosla Committee report was welcomed by the Government of Gujarat, but was rejected by the Governments of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.

The three governments reached an agreement in July 1974, stating that the utilisable flow at 75 per cent dependability be assessed at 20 million acre feet (MAF) and that Maharashtra and Rajasthan should get 0.5 MAF and 0.25 MAF water respectively for use in their territories.Since a tribunal had in the meanwhile been appointed under the Inter-State Water Disputes Act 1946 and had even given its verdict, the final orders of the Tribunal could be obtained only in 1978. These orders related to the allocating of 27.88 MAF of water between Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh,. the height fo the Navagam dam (by now known as Sardar Sarovar Project); the sharing of benefits from the Sardar Sarovar Project by Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra; sharing of irrigation benefits between Gujarat and Rajasthan; the Narmada Sagar (Punasa) project cost to be borne by Gujarat; the regulated releases by the Madhya Pradesh Government in return; and rehabilitation of the oustees from Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra as a consequene of the construction of the Sardar Sarovar project. An interesting political interlude was provided by the opposition of the Congress, which was out of power then in Madhya Pradesh to the project, mouthing practically all the slogans that the opponents of the project adopted. Hower, when the Congress returned to power, the whole attitude of the party to the project changed, and it became a great supporter of the project in Madhya Pradesh.

(Continued)

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Sarovar Project

WORLD BANK ASSISTANCE

In 1978, the World Bank was approached for assistance. It recommended the establishment of a high-level Narmada Planning Group, appointment of private Indian consultants for various studies and appointment of foreign experts for certain key areas through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the International Development Association (IDA). Accordingly, the Operations Research Group (ORG), Baroda, and the Tata Economic Consultancy Services (TECS) Bombay were appointed in 1979 and 1980 to generate studies.

The Gujarat Irrigation Department received a 10 million credit for the formulation of the project. The same year the Narmada Review Committee was established. In accordance with the direction of the Narmada Water Disputes Tribunal, the Tata Economic Consultancy Services submitted its report in May 1983, and that report put the benefit-cost ratio of the Sardar Sarovar Project at 1.39 at the market price and 1.84 at the economic prices. The World Bank submitted a report in February 1985 on Sardar Sarovar Project and in December 1986 on the Narmada Sagar Project. In 1985, the World Bank signed an agreement with the Governments of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh to finance the project. It laid down the condition that the persons displaced by the project ought to be rehabilitated, making a specifically separate loan agreement for the rehabilitation component of the loan, earmarking certain funds for this work, so that the rehabilitation work did not suffer from any lack of funds.

ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONS

The new Ministry of Environment and Forests constituted in the 1980s suggested in April 1986 that the environmental impact assessment for the two projects was incomplete and it would take a further two to three years. In its view, the environmental porblems for the Narmada Sagar Project were likely to be much more severe than those of the Sardar Sarovar Project. Only a third of the land required for the project had been identified. The Ministry suggested reduction of the height of the Narmada Sagar Project, complemented by reducing the minimum drawdown level (MDDA) of the Sardar Sarovar Project. The Ministry of Water Resources also endorsed the concern and anxiety of the Ministry of Environment and Forests. Despite these reservations, the Ministry of Water Resources suggested the approval of the project conditionally. This was done in June 1987.

1991 IS NOT 1982 & WHAT SUCH PROJECTS CAN DO ?

It is thus clear that it is not proper for the Sardar Sarovar Project authorities to come out with such a publication in 1991 which has confined itself only to developments up to 1982.

However, the chronicling of the facts adverse to the project by itself cannot be interpreted to mean that a water development project is not needed or that a multipurpose project is an evil. The assured availability of water and power need to be increased not only for agricultural development but also for industrial development. Therefore, there cannot be any blind opposition to big dams and water projects, as is the wont today.

One has only to visualise the horrible prospects this country would have faced if the water development projects constructed over the last 40 years had not been there, and the country had to carry the additional burden of having to pay for food imports in foreign exchange as it had to do earlier. If even without having to import the major food grains (the country unfortunately has still to import edible oils and occasionally sugar--both of which are in short supply for many years now) the present indebtedness of the country has already brought the Government to its knees before the World Bank–IMF combine working under the inspiration of the Unitd States Government, there can be little doubt that with food imports, the indebtedness of the country would have been still higher, if the various water development projects to develop irrigation and power supplies had not been undertaken.

Undoubtedly technology has undergone tremendous development over the last 50 years or so, and this country should take advantage of the new technology to make projects more realistic and their implementation more scientific and the resettlement of those displaced by the projects more human and economically productive. It is to be expected that the Governments of Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh and the authorities of the Narmada Water Projects would give close attention to the manyy points of criticism and bring about necessary changes while implementing the projects.

Mr. Subhash Chandra Sarker is a former Editor of the Commerce Weekly, Bombay

OUR EDITOR'S COMMENT ON THE BOOK

It is suggested for the consideration of the Project authorities and the StateGovernments concerned that perhaps the popular mistrust and protest against the series of projects along the Narmada can be mitigated and resolved if advance and proper attention is given to the needs of the people in the higher reaches and catchment regions of the Narmada and all its tributaries on the scientific and judicious watersheds management basis. The people of these reigions, mostly tribal comunities, have an equal right to the benefits bonus of Narmada as much as the beneficiaries in the down-stream command areas. Also the problems of luprooting and resettling elsewhere the displaced communities can be reduced to manageable propotions by reconsidering the relevant dimensions and parameters in cluding the height of the dam, the storage of water and the level of power generation etc. Especially the extent and intensity of irrigation and the water allowance need to be reviewed from the point of economic and efficient use of water for the new proposed package of crops. Experience of several recent projects has been that higher intensity and water allowance in the absence of water discipline create more complex peoblems than the prosperity or relief they provide.

B.H.

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DISILLUSIONED, GROPING YET HOPEFUL TO THE LAST

Raj Thapar : ALL THESE YEARS : A Memoir
Seminar Publications, New Delhi, (1991) pp. 472; Rs. 275/-

Comment by S. Gupta

I have read this book with great interest. It deals with a period, which covers the major part of my own life from 1945 to 1983, and refers to many persons whom I had the opportunity of knowing personally during the course of my Foreign Service career. It is a pity that illness prevented the author from dealing with the period 1983 to 1987, when she died of cancer. They were years of tumult and turmoil, and Raj Thapar's perceptive and frank analysis would have illuminated our understanding of the events of that period and of the role of the characters who tried, howsoever unsuccessfully, to shape it.

Many articles have been written about that period in newspapers and periodicals and a number of books have also been published. But, Raj Thapar had the rare advantage of knowing many of the prominent actors on the stage personally. She also had the insight to recognise the mundane, and sometimes sordid, motives behind their public postures, the courage to write about them with honesty and without the slightest fear of possible consequences for herself or her family; and she could do it all with a fluency and a felicity which is very rare in Indian writers of the English language.

A TALE OF VANITY & SELF-IMPORTANCE ?

It is not surprising that a lot of people have read the book; and many of those who have not, wish to do so now. One comment that is often made is that Raj is obsessed with a sense of personal vanity, and this view is sought to be illustrated with reference to the 'influential' role of her husband, Romesh, in his relations with the late Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi. I am not in a position to comment on it, because I know nothing about it personally. But, even if there is any exaggeration in it, the fact that both Raj and Romesh were in frequent personal touch with the late P.M. cannot be denied, and I know that Indiraji liked the company of intellectuals, which the Thapars undoubtedly were. This may have been due partly to her desire, like that of her illustrious father, to act as a patron of arts and letters.

THE DISILLUSIONMENT

The views of the author regarding Communism and the C.P.I. make interesting and instructive reading. She and her husband were deeply involved in the activities of the Communist Party, when they were living in Bombay. But they became more and more disillusioned by the gulf between their professions and practice, and decided ultimately to disassociate themselves from its leaders and activities. They could see what was wrong long before the faults, the inner contradictions and the fallacies became apparent to the whole world, as they have now.

We invite more comments on the book from other contemporaries. Ed.

UNMASKING THE HIGH & MIGHTY

The major part of the book deals with the political history of post-1947 India, and some of the well-known characters, who have had prominent roles in it. Raj Thapar has written in a singularly uninhibited style and with a frankness such as one finds but rarely. This has been possible no doubt because the book contains her personal Diary, and was published posthumously. The merciless manner in which some of the principal characters in that drama have been unmasked and shown to have feet of clay, will no doubt give a shock to the persons concerned, but the revelations will prove to be in the public interest from the long-term point of view because public awareness of the realities of what really motivates people, howsoever highly placed, may serve to prevent the selfishnesses, the tricks and the deceptions of the past from being repeated in the future.

IT MAKES ONE SAD

When I read a book like this, it makes me feel very sad and depressed and pessimistic, not because of the painful tragedies of the past or of the non-fulfilment of our cherished hopes and fond dreams, but because it shows that Destiny is stronger than the strongest amongst us, and that Tragedy is the end of our Triumphs. Is there a way out of it ?

In answer, one hears a faint echo from the innermost recesses of the heart and the mind that Salvation and Stability and Progress lie not in the hands of great men and women, but in the strength and durability of the institutions – political, economic, social and cultural – which generations of unknown but dedicated and patriotic individuals may help to build, brick by brick, through one lifetime after another.

A LIFE THAT WAS GOOD & PURPOSEFUL

After thinking deeply about India, her people and her achievements and failures, the author still felt confused about the mainsprings of the creativity that one finds in Indian civilisation and culture. Her tentative conclusion, in her own words, was: "Perhaps, it is only when you allow the subconscious to flow into you without hindrance that you can create... but I am groping." And this was the feeling that she had about everything that she saw around her until the very end. Happily, however, she did not suffer from a feeling of frustration so far as her own life was concerned, as judged from the last sentence in her Diary where she says: "It has been a good and purposeful life, full of many concerns, as I wanted it to be."

This book will arouse a lot of controversy and cause a lot of resentment to many people. But, it is a very readable book and throws a flood of light on many of the events and personalities in our history during the last 50 years or so.

Prof. S. Gupta is a former member of the Indian Foreign Service and a noted academician who retains his fondness for books.

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ESSAYS IN POLITICAL AWARENESS

Ashis Nandy : TRADITIONS, TYRANNY AND UTOPIAS

Oxford University Press, Delhi (1987) pp. xxx + 168; Rs 120/-

Review by A.M. Ghose

These "essays in the politics of awareness "deal with what its author calls"the basics of an alternative perspective on modern oppression". The central paradox which appears to have occupied the author's attention is found in a passage from the *Mahabharata* quoted on *p. 20.* What the *Mahabharata* says is echoed by Romain Rolland: "Victory is always more catastrophic for the vanquishers than the vanquished". "The oppressed", Nandy writes, "is never a pure victim". But who said so? One can say,*a la* Hegel, that "the oppressor is never a pure victor".

The West, with its ideologies of normality, masculinity, maturity and technological rationality, notions which Nandy examines and analyses at length, is the oppressor and India is "the vanquished". Nandy, among other things, offers a new reading of Gandhi. In this connection, he examines concepts like compassion, freedom, justice and dissent.

VARIED THEMES ON WESTERN MODELS/UTOPIAS & OTHER NOTIONS

Nandy's reading is wide. The names of authors and their works, famous and not so famous, flow torrentially with a devastating effect on the common reader. One wishes Nandy to have allowed his arguments to germinate and grow gradually, rather than scaffolding his observations, often in a stately fashion, with the views gathered from authors and their works.

Some of the themes, for example, on which he dwells are : the "Western" model of growth and development, the 'sickness' of the Western Civilization, the blueprints of Utropias drawn by the scientists and technocrats of the West, and the notion of adulthood, as it is understood by the thinkers of the West.

It is true that "growth and development",as we find them in Europe and America, have acquired monstrous proportions. But why characterise them as "western"?

In all ages and traditions, there were men who believed that a few have the right to dominate over others, natural slaves; that society is found to be hierarchical and that expropriation, in one form or another, is unavoidable. It is equally true that in those ages and civilizations, there were others who believed that minimizing one's wants and requirements is in itself a virtue, that to hierarchize social classes is harmful. They also believed that equality of law, equal freedom of speech or equal regard for all should be treated as watchwords. It is, therefore, not exactly a question of the "West" or the "East".

The Sanskrit word *'balak'*, children, is more often than not used pejoratively, and a successful adult is likened to a *'Sala'* tree with taurine shoulders. *'Vaatsalya'*, love of children, as a theme in literature,came into prominence late in the history of Sanskrit. Manu's observation on *'Vaanaprastha'* and *'Sannyaasa'* showed that the worship of youth was not unknown in the Indian antiquity. One is reminded of the legend of Yayati. One could quote any number of passages from the Indian epics and the *Smrtis* about women, which are far from gratifying. If Nandy wants us to believe that 'hyper-adulthood and hyper-masculinity' are typical western notions', I am afraid, he is mistaken. Even in the *Gita* (9.32) women are treated like *'sudras'*.

SICKNESS IN THE WEST & THE ORIENT

Garaudy, in his extremely readable Foreword, says that 'the western countries are sick'. The Orient – I don't know if Edward W. Said would say that the Orient too is an "accident" – is no less sick. All that one can say is that the sickness of the western countries" with their blind economic growth" is different from the sickness of the Orient. A large number of men and women living without proper food, sanitation and dwelling is, by no means, a sign of health.

EAST *VERSUS* WEST – *THEIR MUTUAL* DISCOVERY

Perhaps the dichotomous division of the East and the West is a product of mutual distrust which often blends with love as well as aversion. It is the West which discovered the East, perhaps, in stages; and the discovery, over the last three or four centuries, has acquired a mosaic pattern.

The West discovered the East with help of empire builders and adventures, traders and merchants, explorers of all sorts, missionaries,jounalists, profound scholars and antiquarian, mystics and, finally, vagabonds. The East discovered the West, if at all, in a *passive* manner. Personally, I am doubtful about an attitude which loves to reify the East and the West. Such a reification creates more confusion.

Man by nature believes that other members of the society in which he lives should agree on certain important issues; they should share a cluster of beliefs, opinions, attitudes and, finally, hopes. It is these hopes which give birth to a utopia . Perhaps utopians have also to do something with how we perceive perplexities. We are not only perplexed by the existence of injustice, cruelty etc., we look at our own perplexities in different ways.

Some of us believe that behind these perplexities, there are economic, social and political factors and that they can be removed, at least, to a considerable extent, by introducing certain major changes in the economic, social, legal and political institutions. Others believe that these perplexities have their sources, if at all, in man's pride, arrogance, greed and, finally, in man's unflinching faith in human reason. The perplexities could be removed by man's submitting to the will of God. Still others have believed that the alleged perplexities are, in reality, not there; they simply vanish once the self realizes itself. Perhaps all of them have their respective 'utopias'.

Philosophers, I am told, have talked about degrees of truth and reality. I don't know if they have also talked of degrees of Utopia ! A world-view in which probabilism occupies an important positon is, by no means, an ancient phenomenon, especially in the Western world. Isn't it true that 'the quest for certainty' came to be treated as futile only

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INVESTIGATING FACTS & BELIEFS

Sushil Srivastava : THE DISPUTED MOSQUE- A HISTORICAL INQUIRY
Vistaar Publications, New Delhi, (1991) Rs. 58/-

Comments by Udayan Majumdar

History is time past, and what happened in the past is usually settled. But not so for the Vishwa Hindu Parishad, currently attempting to resurrect atavistic folk beliefs regarding the birthplace of the popular Hindu hero, Rama, son of Dasaratha, ruler of the kingdom of Ayodhya in the ancient past (as presented in the Valmiki *Ramayana,* a popular story of India written probably during the fourth century B.C.)

In fact, the VHP led *kar seva* programme for constructing the Rama temple at Ayodhya (in the Faizabad district of Uttar Pradesh) on the site at which presently stands the 500 years old Babri Masjid, has stirred up a lot of controversy resulting in nationwide upheavals and communal bloodbath. And precisely for this reason, in this book entitled "*The Disputed Mosque-A Historical Inquiry*", Dr. Sushil Srivastava of Allahabad University takes up cudgels with a number of existing popular notions, as and when he criticizes the VHP views that Rama was actually born at the site of the Babri Masjid, that Babur's mosque was raised by dislodging Rama's temple, etc.

SOME QUESTIONS

For Srivastava, the centuries old records and archaeological data are an enormous quarry which supply him with the material for his historical inquiry into the present controversy. What really was the disputed place of worship at Ayodhya, and when exactly was it built ? Was it a temple consecrating the birthplace of the legendary Rama? Or was the mosque constructed at the behest of the Mughal emperor Babur in 1528 ? Or was it actually a Buddhist *stupa* ? Did Babur actually destroy the Rama temple and construct a mosque in its place? These are some of the questions Srivastava asks, and steadfastly declines to accept the answers given to him by English historians like Leyden, Erskine, Carnegy,Benet, Nevill, et al. and now the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and its like– minded followers.

Srivastava makes serious investigations into the presence of the disputed mosque in Ayodhya and clarifies that the existence of a mosque in a Hindu place of worship is not uncommon in places in Upper India. For instance, in Chitrakoot. (in Uttar Pradesh) the forgotten temple of Balaji Thakur is designed as a mosque. And thus, it is small wonder that the Babri Masjid has become the source of such confusion. Of course, contends Srivastava, the British Government fully exploited the conflict arising out of this confusion and controversy, and further, they gave filip to the Hindu community's attempts at 'liberating' what came to be associated in their minds as the birthplace of Rama in Ayodhya, in exchange for the latter's support to the British Empire.

Unfortunately, according to Srivastava, even after independence, the Indian state continued to support the Hindu cause. And this, along with the VHP's recent intentions of undoing the 'realities of history', have precipitated the present Hindu-Muslim hostility on that issue.

Though Srivastava is a superb diagnostician and though he succeeds to a great extent in making us "understand the past, free of any personal biases", nonetheless he fails to offer any actual clue to the truth regarding the disputed mosque. At times the reader is compelled to infer that the whole dispute is only the result of the handiwork of the British based on contending popular myths and grave distortions of history.

Further in his attempts at 'objective' documentation, Srivastava seems to be oblivious of the fact that more often that not it is the *collective* which really propels history, and that there cannot be any 'pure' historical description untainted by any kind of explanation. Again, Srivastava writes in the universal language of the social science community and also attempts to comprehend reality in the same mode, and as a result, shows scant respect for local beliefs,myths, that also at times borders on total disregard for people's own perceptions of a historical reality.

Mr. Udayan Majumdar is Senior Research Fellow in the Department of Sociology, University of Calcutta.

ESSAYS ...

(Continued from page14)

in this century? Utopias for which men are prepared to die are, in any case, on their way out. Prof. Nandy talks of 'absolute relativism' (*pp 55* and *93*). What does he mean?

GANDHI & THE WEST

Gandhi's cultural critique of the West, in many ways, offers a fresh approach to the study of Gandhi. Then, positivistic isolation of reason and decision *(Enscheidung)* as Habermas would say, severely needs to be examined at length. "Gandhi", Nandy writes, "refused to grant total qutonomy and control to the technologist" *(p 135)*. True ! But can we grant total autonomy and control to any one? Elsewhere Nandy writes, "...from the individual's moral choice, when *rightly* arrived at and *rightly* exercised, was for him (Gandhi) a superior collective choice by definition." (*p. 149; emphasis added*) But how on earth do we know that the choice was *rightly* arrived at and *rightly* exercised"?

At one place, Nandy writes, "It was through Gandhi that the *Gita* came closest to being a canonical text in Hindu consciousness" *(p. 159.* This is a gross overstatement. Nandy would have us believe that the importance of Gandhi as a thinker *(p 160 n 43)* has not been sufficiently acknowledged. Gandhi himself believed that his life is more important than his writings. Gandhi, I beg to submit, was a poor thinker. This, however, does not, in any manner, diminish his stature.

Nandy's manner is delightful and occasionally stimulating.

Prof A.M. Ghose is former Head of the Deptt. of Philosophy, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur

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A COME-BACK FROM THE TWILIGHT ZONE

P.Lal : LESSONS
Writers Workshop, Calcutta- (1991). 385 pages. Rs. 100/-

Comment by Prema Nandkumar

How does one cope up with the ominous presence of *Yama* ? There is a thin, twilight zone that divides the area where man is alive, active, supreme and the beyond, where *Yama* is imperturbable, unyielding, final.

THE ABODE OF YAMA

While science denies the return journey from Yama's abode,and human nature accepts the irreparable loss once it happens, the twilight zone remains the land of struggle and hope. In the twilight zone, there is no movement, and yet there is action of a superior kind. An action impelled by faith, by will-power and by love as triumphantly essayed by Ruru in India and Alcestis in Greece.

Sri Aurobindo's massive epic *Savitri* has described this twilight zone in great detail. The battle of Love and Death takes place in the Book of the Double Twilight. When reading the opening canto of this book-- 'The Dream Twilight of the Ideal' -- I have never failed to remember Helen Gardner's description of Eliot's *Burnt Norton:*

"The lovely lyric movement brings us back to the garden. It is purely natural in its imagery. It is a lyric of twilight; but this is a twilight of another kind; it is full of expectancy. The light has gone, the cloud has shadowed the sun. We are living in time; but we wait in time for a touch: the touch of life or of death, a touch of tenderness or a touch of foreboding".

It is after reading P.Lal's *Lessons* that I realise how accurate the perceptions of Sri Aurobindo had been when he indited the Book of the Double Twilight. What seemed superb poetry, now appears as a visionary recordation of an eternal truth in terms of photographic realism. A homage to the Savitris of all time.

Lessons is about the twilight zone that Prof. Lal entered when he took ill suddenly while on a lecture- tour in the United States. A three-month battle with Yama was waged on Lal's behalf by a dedicated team of doctors and nurses of the Borgess Medical Center in Kalamazoo. That was on the level of the material. At the spiritual level, Prof. Lal's wife, Shyamasree led the attack, backed by innumerable well-wishers. Lal was under heavy medication and on the critical list for several days. Being in coma became a way of life!

TESTAMENT OF A SURVIVOR

In this remarkable 'testament of a survivor', the twilight zone comes alive with terrible immediacy. The 'medical gobbledygook' with references to 'esophagogastroduodenoscopy' and 'pericardial effusion' presents one side of the truth. The other part is the silent endurance of Shyamasree and the loving service rendered by friends and strangers. How does one manage to remain heroic in the face of certain disaster? What was it that Shyamasree and Lal's friends held on to,in those days of encircling gloom ?

"An ineffectual beam of suffering light
Through the despairing darkness dogged their steps.
Like the remembrance of a glory lost;
Even while it grew, it seemed unreal there,
Yet haunted Nihil's chill stupendous realm,
Unquenchable, perpetual,lonely, null,
A pallid ghost of some dead eternity". (*Savitri*)

FAITH SUSTAINS WITH THE BEST IN SCIENCE

And Lal himself lies in a daze of visions and apparitions through his days of coma and weeks of consciousness chilled by the medical expenses ($400,000 which was later written off by the hospital). Every minute filled with anxiety care, dread. It was as if Lal was determined not to die. Deep within him, was he not aware of the job yet to be done, the glory of life, the peaks of achievement? In any case, how could he lose faith in himself when others held on to faith like Shyamasree, Jim and even a stranger, the nurse Jewel Lammers?

Prof. Lal makes an instinctive reference to the 'most wonderful poem, in the *Mahabharata* that has sustained Indian womanhood down the ages, when he remembers Shyamasree trying to quieten his rising hysteria as he is being wheeled in for a nuclear scan:

"She pacifies me, this petite, five-feet-one lady to whom I proposed in 1955 because she was, I felt, gentle, sweet, undemanding, pliant and graceful, frail and sensitive, and unobtrusively intellingent in the way the Indian tradition expects women to be. (And an egregious punstress to boot!) How was I to know that in a fearful crisis she would be like Savitri with Satyavan-- strong and bright and straighter and more stubbornly assuring than even the 1000– years old non-rusting pillar they excavated from the ruins of Konarka and planted in front of the Jagannatha Temple in Puri? She looks at me with a digified smile".

Indeed, all the best in advanced science was at the service of Prof. Lal. All the incredible facilities of modern medicine (hi- tech life-supporting machines, miracle pills) were in action. But the patient's condition was so bad that none of these things could have helped if the 'conscious will' had been absent. Mercifully, Lal had no lack of that, for Conscious Will had taken the human shape of Shyamsree:

"Even though all falters and falls and sees an end
And the heart fails and only are death and night,
God-given her strangth can battle against doom
Even on a brink where Death alone seems close
And no human strength can hinder or can help".
(*Savitri*)

A remarkable document in every way, *Lessons* also contains brief pen-portraits of great personalities like Kalidas Nag and Suniti Kumar Chatterji and a gentle account of the crisis by Shyamasree.

Where there is an Ideal, can Death ever be proud?

Dr. Prema Nandakumar is a well known critic and creative writer.

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TWO UNIVERSAL THEMES IN INDO-ENGLISH POETRY

S.N.A. Rizvi, (ed.), LOVE AND DEATH IN INDIAN POETRY IN ENGLISH
Doaba House, Delhi, (1989), 190 pages, Rs. 150/-

Reviewed by P.K.J. Kurup

Maybe, a debate could develop around the issue whether or not the ever growing corpus of Indian poetry in English is prompted by an ever-sharpening perceptivity on the shifting sands of post-independence India. Nevertheless, the fact remains that Indo-English poetry has never failed to kick the critics very often, and set them working on the job of initiating a variety of fresh trends in their critical studies.

THEMATIC STUDIES : ON LOVE & DEATH

Study of the thematic concerns in Indo-English poetry is one such trend. The book under review falls in this category, where a few critics – some of them distinguished practitioners of poetry – set themselves to illuminate the stance of the leading Indo-English poets on the two most universal themes – Love and Death. The most potent forces as they are, marking the rhythm of human existence, the concerns of love and death have always formed a vital undercurrent of the intuitive consciousness of the poet and his comprehensiveness of life as a rich experience. The perceptive analysis conducted in the critical studies included in this book bears out the fact that, when variously approached and with different aesthetic feels, a valid critical effort of this kind to reveal the poet's view of the central issues of life could remain ever fresh and ever evocative.

The editor, S.N.A. Rizvi, in his introduction to the fifteen critical studies included in the book, presents a brief survey of the development of Indian poetry in English. Starting with Henry Derozio, he brings it uptodate.

The critical essays that follow by diverse hands in Indo-Anglian criticism take up for analytical study a vast coverage of poets: from Henry Derozio to P. Lal, Nissim Ezekiel to Pravin Parikh and from Sarojini Naidu to Gauri Pant, Malathi Rao and Bina Agrawal. While some of the essays concentrate on the concept of certain individual poets of either love or death or both, others highlight the comparative differences in the poetic stance in terms of love and death of various Indo-English poets – pioneers, popular, major, minor, old and new.

LOVE : MALE & FEMALE RESPONSES

The critical studies open with "Love: Male and Female Response in Indian Poetry in English" by *O.P. Bhatnagar* – himself a distinguished Indo-English poet. He attempts to explicate as to how the conceptualisation of sensations and their visualisation andexpressionget coloured by the forces of medium used by the poet and the milieu that shapes his social mores, giving way in turn to changed approaches even to the central issues like love and death. He also initiates a revealing exploration into the obvious uniqueness of the male and female responses to love.

His conclusion is two-fold:One. while the love poetry of men-poets mostly remains romantic and ludicrous, its female counterpart takes a more realistic, frank and courageous view of love, while redefining its aspects. And two, it is more in English than in their regional languages where they are dominated by the male cultural mores that the women poets' rebellious stance manifests itself, by virtue of the freedom offered by the expression in a language other than one's own. But the remark, while evincing rare insight, is not substantiated by a deeper exploration, and leaves enough room for the critics to attempt an inter-disciplinary study – psychological in particular – so as to peep into the female psyche which may have contributed to this peculiar female predicament.

IMAGES OF DEATH

Bhatnagar has contributed another critical study to the volume: "Images of Death in Indian Poetry in English", which, in many ways, provides a fresh perspective on the treatment of the theme of death, which has undergone an obvious transformation over years with various Indian poets in English. It is a well-documented review in which the reader is taken through the ever changing patterns of interaction between poetic sensibility and death that get transformed by the impact of changing socio-cultural ethos and divergent idologies.The probing is inevitably based on the study of the poetic imagery to highlight their bearing on the thematic pre-occupation and suggestive resonances. He convincingly establishes the point that between the old hands like Aurobindo and Tagore and the new like Chandrashekhar Patil and Gauri Deshpande, there has been a mellowing of attitude towards death, which in turn has changed the image of death "as a tyrant, an evil, an intruder into a redeemer and companion worth courting and living with". The probing ends here. What comes out next is the poet in him and the reformist critic with the mission of humanisation of poetry. Reiterating an earlier remark of his own (refer to the essays in his "Perspective on Indian Poetry in English" where he calls upon the Indo-English poets to come out of their infatuation with image-making and to be committed to the task of progressive enlargement of man's sense of truth and reality as collective being) he reacts rather sharply at the way in which the poetic confrontations with death end "just as another rhetoric of life".

The view is a remote echo of the now outdated school of progressive literature, and makes one aware of a gap discernible in the history of Indo-English poetry. It is rather surprising that though it had once caught most of the literature in regional languages and the Indo-English fiction like a storm and then died an unnatural death, the call of the progressive literature never found receptive ears in the Indo- English poetry scene.

WITH SYMPATHY & UNDERSTANDING

Most of the other critical studies included in this book pursue more or less the same scheme, though through different angles of subjecting the poems of various poets with a historical perspective and based on the pattern of imagery employed in them. While each of the critics successfully tries to shed some new light on the topic discussed in varying degrees, the critical strategy of all of them is to

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(Contd.) LOVE & DEATH THEMES ....

approach the poets and their poetry with sympathy and understanding. During this process, a few of them come out with some acute obsevations about the poet's attitude to the fundamental issues regulated by the ethos of the period in which he lived and wrote. Thus in "From Romance to Ritual: A Study of the Treatment of Death in Indian Poetry in English" *Dr. Niranjan Mohanty* observes: "Verticality of death was over with Romantics; what emanates therefrom is death's horizontality, death's rueful existence even in the dust, *sans* crown, *sans* court and *sans* courtiers. What is left for us is not the epical personality of death but "death's ironic scrapings", "death's hocus pocus".

While discussing O.P. Bhatnagar's view of death in "The Fact of Life :The Concept of Love and Death in Contemporary Indo-English Poetry", *Dr. P.S. Kasture* remarks "the triumph of human spirit lies not in the grand loss but in the little remains shored against the devastating tide of discussion".

AUROBINDO'S AESTHETIC EQUILIBRIUM

In his study of Sri Aurobindo's view of death-"Death in the Poetry of Sri Aurobindo", *Dr. S. Krishna Sharma* takes the reader to seek out through the analysis of two Aurobindo poems, "Love and Death" and "Savitri", the evolution that the poet's attitude to death underwent during the period of creation of the two poems. The exploration develops into an exciting pursuit of judgement, and pursuades the reader to join the critical view that behind his poetic journey from a point when he viewed death as an antagonist to life to the point where he visualizes death as "a highly recondite spiritual emblem", there lies the poet's aesthetic equilibrium achieved through his yogic and esoteric experiences.

THE NAIR (?) HERITAGE

Dr. Harimohan Prasad's "The Erotic and the Ethenic : A Study in the Love Poetry of Kamala Das" is an attempt to underscore the extraneous elements contributing to the confessionalist's stance of Das' poetic self, and focusses on her Dravidian tradition and Nair heritage. This trend of leaning heavily on "the Nair heritage" to work out a convenient theory or critical criterion without testing its authenticity and feasibility has now become an oft-repeated cliche with critics of Das' poetry. The view is debatable. Equally debatable is the remark of Mr. Jeffrey about Nair women which Dr. Prasad quotes on page no. 46. It is time some critic authoritative enough to comment on the extent of impact of the social history of Kerala on the subconscious minds of the Nair women threw some light on this aspect to find out whether the "racial nightmare of the Nair woman" has anything in particular to do with the kind of identity crisis Kamala Das encounters.

OTHER OBSERVATIONS & GENERALISATIONS

While *R.C. Sharma* concentrates on the images of death in Sarojini Naidu's poetry to illustrate her preoccupation with death rather convincingly, *Dr. P.V.S.N. Murthy's* contention that the satirical quality in the love lyrics of P.Lal results from the poet's anguish regarding the gap between the ideal and the experience in respect of love, though may be true, is less convincing. May be because the critic does not toil to lead the reader into the poetic consciousness with a heightened keenness.

Dr. A.N. Dwivedi's "The Changing Pattern of Love: The Contemporary Scene" and *Dr. Bijay Kuamar Das'* two essays - "The Crystal Glance of Love: Kamala Das and S. Kumar as Love Poets" and "Sunshine and Rain : Love and Death in Modern Indo- English Poetry" – are informative studies based on the various critical approaches already available on the topics and very useful to university students of Indo-English Literature.But as they are critics with many volumes of critical studies in Indian writing in English to their credit, Dr. Dwivedi is also a practising poet. An avid reader would probably expect them to be really serious with the element of creativity in the business of literary criticism and to come out with some fresh approach, something less commonly observed and something that may support the sharpness of their critical acumen. But more often than not, they seem to be content with free wheeling observation to arrive ultimately at broad generalisations and flat, abrupt conclusive statements.

A REVEALING ANALYSIS OF IMAGERY

Moving on the *Muhammad Mansoor Khan's* critical study "Bhatnagar's Orphan Marauder – Death", one gathers a different impression. Here Prof. Khan applies all of his critical faculty for a brilliant indepth study of many of Bhatnagar's poems and develops it into a revealing analysis of imagery. Emphasising on three unconventional images employed by the poet – pale moon in daylight, orphan forced to beg in streets and parentless child in need of protection–Prof. Khan weaves the theme of his thesis that Bhatnagar's poetry with his calculated imagery– technique succeeds in "domesticating the terror of death" by offering "a plea for the catharsis of fear of death"

WITH TWO VOICES

"The Voices of Death in Nandy's Poems" by *Dr. A. Ramakrishna* Rao and *Dr. L.Adinarayan* is a comment on Nandy's poems. The essay starts with the remark that "Pritish Nandy is not a favourite with the academic circles" and concludes with a hurriedly brought comparison of Nandy with Dylan Thomas. Somehow it leaves behind the impression that the authors have been pleading in an apologetic tone for a weak case.

In "The Treatment of Death in Modern Indo-Anglian Poetry (1960- 80)",*Dr. S.D. Sharma* devotes only a few paragraphs to the study of Nandy's attitude to death. But he shows more confidence and a kind of sympathetic objectivity in his treatment of the topic. The essay makes unconfusing reading and presents a critical auditing of the conceptualisation of death in the hands of the leading modern Indo-English poets.

LOOKING AT DEATH WITH A HEROIC COOL

Dr. P.D. Chaturvedi's "Macabre Imagery: Beyond the Despair of Death" is a scholarly exposition as to how the poets Kesav Malik and O.P. Bhatnagar stand in contrast to their contemporaries in terms of looking upon the phenomenon of life and death. It is an intelligently built up argument with the support of cues taken from various assumptions on the aesthetic function of poetry and attempts to seek out the dynamics of transmutation belonging

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RADHAKRISHNAN : THE EDUCATIONST

A Tribute by D. Anjaneyulu

Radhakrishnan was a *teacher* and remained one all his life, whatever he did, wherever he was, at home or abroad. (An 'educator' as the Americans would have it, in their supposed search for a simpler and more direct form of expression!) Basically, he was doing the same thing, whether it was in a college classroom (in Madras, Mysore or Calcutta) in the University auditorium (in Waltair, Banaras or Oxford), in the Upper House of the National Parliament (New Delhi) or in the Assembly Hall of an international forum in Geneva or Paris. And he made a splendid job of whatever he was called to do.

A TEACHER BORN TO HIS VOCATION

One can easily venture to make the statement that Radhakrishnan was a 'born teacher', if ever there was one. (Not because his birthday is observed as Teachers' Day under official auspices). But then, one may be confronted with the question whether a teacher is 'born' or 'made'. Not an unnatural question, when we realize that in recent years, poets are, in fact, 'made' in academic workshops in American Universities. But, talking of teachers who have a call, not merely a calling, we may still be justified in distinguishing those who are *born*, like V.S. Srinivasa Sastri and Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, from the common or garden variety (who form the vast majority) who are 'made' in the various pedagogic (training) institutes.

While it is an admitted fact that Radhakrishanan came to the academic study of philosophy by accident, he came to the teaching profession by conscious choice, by deliberate intent. "I cannot say that I came to study of philosophy as one dedicated from childhood to the service of the altar. I am not a philosopher because I could not help being one". He said that in *'Fragments of a Confession'*, asking himself : "That philosophy became the subject of my special study, was it a part of my destiny, was it the result of my character or was it mere chance?"

But there was no room for raising or answering such questions in his choice of teaching as a profession, and also as mission. Maybe there was, in the Indian context, a close relation between "Poverty and Philosophy", which forms a chapter in the brilliant, perceptive, unsentimental, objective, authoritative and well- documented biography by his son, Dr. S. Gopal.

Radhakrishnan was about 21, when he became a teacher, joining the President College in 1909, in somewhat peculiar circumstances. To quote his son and biographer, "...there being no suitable vacancy, Radhakrishnan was appointed to a substantive post of sub-assistant inspector of schools in an area far from the city, but directed to fill a temporary vacancy as Malayalam Master in the Presidency College at Madras on a salary of Rs. 60-80 per month. He knew no Malayalam, but was expected to teach philosophy. So he joined official service and started, for want of anything else, on a teaching career."

LECTURES ON PSYCHOLOGY

Soon after that, he was deputed to the Teachers' Training College at Saidapet to obtain a Diploma in Teaching. According to some of his colleagues and contemporaries (including M.K. Rangaswami Iyengar) young Radhakrishnan happened to deliver a series of lectures on Psychology, in place of the regular professor, which he did rather reluctantly, because of his innate shyness. These lectures were extremely well received, in fact eagerly lapped up. These were later put together in a slim booklet of about 75 pages, entitled *"Essentials Of Psychology"*, which was printed at the Clarendon Press in Oxford and brought out in 1912 by the Indian branch of the Oxford University Press as its first publication. This has been re-issued recently in connection with his birth centenary, and has crossed its third impression.

In this booklet, all the essential qualities of an able teacher are amply reflected – clear thinking, logical analysis, lucid exposition and a lively style, with a gift of happy phrase. All these were achieved with admirable brevity and characteristic wit and brilliance.

Commenting on 'Education' in his introduction to *'Essentials Of Psychology'* Radhakrishnan says:

> "The basis of educational theory is psychology. Education has for its aim the complete and harmonious development of the different functions of man. What these are and how they develop are problems of psychology. Every educator must have a full knowledge of the nature of the mind which it is his business in bringing into fullness and maturity. A knowledge of child-mind is, therefore, necessary for a teacher. Again, any method of teaching opposed to psychological principles is false. Psychology thus affords the negative touchstone of the true method of teaching."

A POPULAR ACADEMICIAN : SOME REMINISCENCES

That Radhakrishnan had a keen insight into the student mind and was quite *enrapport* with the student community of his day is eloquently testified by many of his former pupils, only a few of whom may be alive today. The late Khasa Subba Rau (founder- editor of the English Weeklies, *Swatantra and Swarajya)*, an undergraduate student of the Presidency College, had vivid recollections of Radhakrishnan's innovative and unconventional method of handling the classes. He would normally come ten minutes late to the class, complete the allotted lesson in 20 minutes, spend about five or ten minutes eliciting titbits from the students about local politics and public affairs, and ask them to spend the rest of the hour in the library.

Not that he was neglecting his prescribed duties, or he was not taking his subject or his wards seriously. Far from it. He did all that was expected of him as a conscientious teacher. May be even more. It is Khasa again, who wrote of him in his *'Men in the Limelight'*. He said:

> "As a teacher he used to give 'notes', and if you read them, well, you had no need to read anything else from any book on the subject they dealt with; for in

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the art of extracting substance from chaff, from out of the pages of the most voluminous of books and condensing it into the smallest imaginable compass, he is an adept without a peer."

"It may be questioned whether 'notes' fulfill a right function in teaching, and it is quite possible that like pre-digested foods, they tend to spoil the efficiency of normal appetites. But unlike several professors whose staple of teaching was contained in a huge notebook (of folio size), which they cherished as a precious heirloom and went, on year after year before successive batches of students, his 'notes' bore no stereotyped form and they came out unrecorded from mind and memory, with skilfull uptodate improvisations that made them look refreshingly original each time."

"He created a feeling of awe with the same ease and thoroughness with which he mastered even the most complicated problems of logic and theory of knowledge, and the most ruffianly spirits of the class-room, incorrigibly bent on mischief at other times, were quelled and subdued by it and reduced to their best behaviour. He conforced discipline like a martinet, but spoke no harsh word."

It was almost the same experience, wherever he went, Presidency College, Madras, Mysore University, Calcutta University or Banares Hindu University. The response of the students (as also members of the teaching staff, with a few exceptions of those affected by 'sour-grapism") was not only favourable, but enthusiastic. In Mysore, at the time of his farewell, the students unleashed the horses and dragged his coach to the railway station. In Calcutta, on more than one occasion, in academic bodies and public meetings,he was chosen to preside, in preference to a dyspeptie and loyalist Vice-Chancellor.

AN UNCOMMON SIGHT

His popularity as a lecturer was so unparalleled that it sometimes led to unprecedented situations. Describing one such, the late K.Iswara Dutt (editor of *Twentieth Century* and *Leader*) wrote:

"There on the Marina in Madras, as 'the low sun makes the colour', men and women who go for a stroll or drive present an impressive spectacle. Occasionally a visitor finds one more impressive, when a vast concourse of people on the sands is addressed by one of the Ciceros of the day. One day, years back, a slim, clear-cut, white-turbaned figure, not looking a politician even by the farthest stretch of imagination, was seen addressing a large gathering of young men, the Presidency College facing the waters having no hall large enough to hold the meeting. Rarely, if ever, had such a contigency of shifting the scene to the beach arisen,when a Professor was to speak."

"Himself taken aback at such an uncommon experience, he prefaced his discourse with a striking observation: 'When Philosophy becomes so popular, it makes matter suspicious.' It was not really the popularity of the subject, but that of the speaker that was, so to say, at stake."

It is worth noting that the audience comprised not only the current students of the College, but some celebrated former students, as well, like Professor, C.V. Raman. If Raman was, by universal acclaim, a ceative researcher in the field of physics, Radhakrishnan could, likewise, be described, with equal justification, as a creative teacher in the field of humanities, philosophy, religion and culture, in particular. He was not only a great populariser of a subject, hitherto considered dry, abstract and abstruse, but a resourceful, imaginative, innovative interpreter, for the benefit of the students and other listeners.

HIS CREATIVE METHOD OF TEACHING

At least, two or three features stand out as particularly striking in this creative method of teaching :

(1) Introduction of the comparative method, where it was not widely adopted, or not thought of at all, except by a few modern thinkers like Russell and Carpenter. The comparisons used by him include those between Indian and European thought, *Vedic* and *Upanishadic* on one side and classical Greek on the other side; between one religion and another, especially between Hinduism and Christianity, in view of his close familiarity with Christian theology and Indian metaphysics. When each system of thought and belief considered itself *sui generis* and smugly self- confident in its self sufficiency, this method of comparison and contrast served to aid and promote a clearer understanding, proceeding, as it did, from the known to unknown.

(2) Adoption of an inter-disciplinary approach was particlarly enlightening to students, with a nodding acquaintance with other subjects like history, politics and literature and none at all with philosophy. Radhakrishnan had an admirable flair for drawing examples and parallels from a variety of sister disciplines, to present Indian philosophy in a wider and sharper perspecitve. His uptodate knowledge through English, and more than ordinary familiarity with Sanskrit literature and the classics of Telugu and Tamil, stood him in good stead in this task.

(3) Contemporary sensibility, with a classical background served to strengthen Radhakrishnan's position, in his conscious effort to reconcile the past with the present. It fitted him for his self-chosen role as a creative interpreter, very different from that of a faithful chronicler of facts and a narrow, literal-minded commentator of sacred, traditional texts. For him, the philosophy of Rabidranath Tagore and the personality of Mahatma Gandhi were not isolated from the world of academic thought, but formed part of a living heritage, the latest and maturest fruits of a dynamic socio-cultural tradition going back to Valmiki, Vyas and Kalidasa, Buddha, Mahavira and Kabir.

A PLACE FOR INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

It may be recalled here that when Radhakrishnan started teaching philosophy, some eighty years ago, there was in the University curriculum no academic discipline, like Indian Philosophy, or hardly any. It was all European Philosophy, of which Radhakrishnan was equally a master, on familiar, even friendly, terms with the thought, not only of Plato and Aristotle, but of Kant and Hegel, Nietzsche and Schopenhauer, Bosanquet, Bergson and Bradley.

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THE EDUCATIONIST

His national reputation as the author of '*The Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore*' and essays and papers on *Bhagavadgita* (commended by Tilak in jail) and his international reputation as Upton Lecturer ('*The Hindu View Of Life*') and Hibbert Lecturer ('*An Idealist View Of Life*') and as author of the monumental two-volume work on '*Indian Philosophy*' have since contributed substantially to the earning and establishment of a secure place for 'Indian Philosophy' in the curriculum of Indian universities. He earned it a respectability in the modern context and served to 'popularise' it, without diluting, distorting or de-grading it, rather like what Russell did for Western Philosophy and Haldane did for modern science.

WHAT SHOULD INDIAN UNIVERSITIES DO ?

A practical idealist and a progressive liberal in matters educational and cultural, Radhakrishnan had his feet firmly on the ground, though his lofty turbaned head might have touched the clouds. He could be nothing less as the teacher of the nation and the society and nothing more as an educational administrator. He always underlined the primacy of free enquiry, as when he said:

> "The value of university training consists not so much in the information acquired as in the scientific habits developed. The students should learn to distinguish knowledge from opinion, fact from theory, should be able to weigh evidence, argue closely and state and examine fairly the opponent's point of view. The spirit of research is nothing else than the carrying out of this attitude of free enquiry and rational reflection. Whether a University succeeds in this, its chief aim, or not depends on its staff or professors."

As Vice-Chancellor at Waltair or Banares, Radhakrishnan was known for his inimitable flair for spotting promising talent. He it was who appointed brilliant young men, like Humayun Kabir, Hiren Mukherjee (Oxford) and V.K.R.V. Rao (Cambridge) to their first or early jobs at the Andhra University. Similarly at Banares, where he encouraged many bright young men and women, who latter made a mark in the academic world.

His devotion to liberal values, as an intellectual, could be seen in the number of thought-provoking works on Marxism and Socialism (though he was by no means a Marxist himself) which he was able to bring with him (because of his privileged position as member of the Committee for Intellectual Cooperation at Geneva) for addition to the Andhra University Library. (The process was unfortunately reversed later, after he left the place.) At Banares, he did his best in relaxing the rules of a hide bound cultural tradition, in relation to women, for instance, who were not allowed to study the Vedas or modern disciplines like Political Science.

B.H.U – A NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

If a University is expected to be universal in intent, if not quite in practice, Indian national universities like BHU must be truly 'national', as well as Indian. He looked upon this University as an instrument of national integration long before this concept began to be propagated under official auspices. Radhadrishnan's effort was always to shape it on breadbased ideals. He wanted Religious Studies to include Christianity and Islam, as well as Hinduism, Bhuddhism and Jainism. He would have it develop as a truly all-India university, not a regional or parochial institution, for the inter-play of provincial politics and the dispensation of local patronage. Before he left, on the eve of Independence, there were already warning signals that the days of intellcetual liberalism and educational idealims were numbered.

EDUCATION COMMISSION - HIS BEST CONTRIBUTION

The report of the University Education Commission under Radhakrishnan's chairmanship was, perhaps, his greatest contribution to Education in free India. It covered a wide range of subjects, like falling academic standards, status and salaries of teachers, delinking of jobs from degrees, religious education, medium of instruction, reservation of seats for the backward, among other things.

Though the report was unanimous, not all its recommendations were accepted or implemented, However , the only major and immediate result of the recommendations, according to Dr. Gopal, was the establishment of the UGC, with substantial benefits to the autonomy and development of Indian Universities.

The name of Gandhi (as also that of Nehru) is invoked in recent years, in season and out of season, with little or no change to our public life and political and social ethics. The name of Radhakrishnan seems to share the same fate in the field of education We cannot hold it against either of these great men. It is lucky for them that they are no longer alive to see what they cannot prevent or mitigate.

Reputed journalist/columnist, Dr. D, Anjaneyulu, a former president of the Madras PressClub has now agreed to be our Editorial Associate based at Madras.

LOVE & DEATH THEMES ....

(*Continued from page* 18)

to the two distinctive sets of poets dealing with the same theme of death. The crux of his argument is that while their contemporaries portray death with a horrified pessimism, these two poets view death with a heroic cool effecting a reduction of fear of death. Though it clings too much to the ennobling aspect of the role of poetry and shows the traits of over-simplification of the complex issues associated with poetic perception, the essay is a competitive attempt in the comparative study of attitudes in poetry.

The job undertaken by Dr. Rizvi is a commendable one and is a valuable addition to literary criticism in Indo-English writings. As there is no other full-length study focussing on specific thematic concerns in Indo-English poetry, it has the value of a pioneer venture. The book has every reason to be recognised as an inevitable aid to the research students. If the appearance of a book has anything to do with its readability, the publisher – *Doaba House, Delhi* – surely deserves congratulation for the neat printing and the very attractive cover design.

Dr. P.K.J. Kurup, a well-known short-story writer in Malayalam, teaches English at the Jagdamba Mahavidyala, Achalpur, Maharashtra. He has worked on Indian Poetry in English for his Ph. D.

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CHERONOBYL – BORN OF SECRECY

Zhores Medvedev : THE LEGACY OF CHERNOBYL
Norton & Co., New York/ London (1990), pp. XIII, + 352

Review by Dhirendra Sharma

Despite hundreds of scientific papers, official and unofficials accounts published, many details of scientific importance about what really happened inside the reactor No. 4 of Chernobyl Nuclear Power Station, during 26 April to 6 May 1986 remain obscure. At many review meetings within the Soviet Union and at various international fora, experts have discussed problems and future of nuclear energy, and the cost of Chernobyl in terms of human, ecological, agricultural and economic devastation., But the facts of the accident are related not only to the scientific and technological nature of harnessing nuclear energy; they also concern political and managerial aspects of nuclear power. It was not humanly possible to record what was actually happening inside the melting radioactive volcano, with 3,000 degree centigrade heat searing fuel core of the reactor, since no man-made object can exist at that temperature to record and report scientific information. Records of the immediately preceding hours, minutes and seconds of the disaster and the study of the environment victims, however, can help. The sarcophagus (as the entombed reactor is now called) has become a scientific laboratory for generations to come.

THE UNTHINKABLE HAPPENED... & WAS BURIED UNDER A COVER OF SECRECY

But the most disturbing aspect of the Battle of Chernobyl is the cover-up of inconvenient information and tendency to shift responsibility, in spite of Gorbachev's efforts of *glasnost and perestroika*. In July 1987, when the Soviet Union held the trial of the Director of the Chernobyl Station, his deputies and engineering team, the proceedigs of the trial were kept secret, not because classified technical information would be divulged, but because they were too embrassing. Many of the official review reports have been classified, even at the International Atomic Energy Agency of the United Nations, because it was feared that if the facts were known, the public trust in nuclear power would be destroyed. For this reason, the official nuclear agencies and the nuclear industries have maintained secrecy about what happened, how it happened, and what are its far reaching consequenes for the present and future generation. The Soviet leaders could not publicly admit failure in a field they were known to be far ahead of all other nuclear nations. But Gorbachev did not hesitate to appeal for outside help to meet the challenges of Chernobyl disaster. Because, as one of the directors said at the trial, *the accident wasn't in the plan*. The unthinkable had happened and the engineers and the operators did not know the level of radiation in the area. They could not measure the radioactivity accurately as there was no radiomenter *(it was burried somewhere)*. There was no meter to read the temperature as high as 2–3,000 degree centigrade. The director Bryukhanov kept reporting that *"the radiation situation is normal"*...

We still do not know the rules and procedures of the Department of Atomic Energy for conducting or meeting nuclear emergencies. But one thing appears common among nuclear technocrats the world over, that they habitually repeat *radiation levels are normal; radioactivity is within the permissible limit; 'there is no leak*, but permit no new's leak. This repression of information had reached the highest point of ridicule during the Chernobyl disaster in the U.S.S.R.

BUILT-IN DESIGN DEFECTS

As the world observes the fifth anniversary of the nuclear disaster (1991), it makes little sense to witch-hunt the men responsible for the catastrophy. Rather to know the reasons of failures, Zhores Medvedev in his latest scientific and yet very readable volume *The Legacy of Chernobyl* points out the most serious problem which plagues nuclear power programme. It was difficult for workers, engineers and scientists to express critical opinion *freely*, fearing the loss of jobs and the perks enjoyed by the members of nuclear establishment. Many safety problems were known to the technocrats. In fact, they had been solved in the *RBMK* blueprint, and perhaps even in the prototypes, but were not solved in the real *RBMK-1000* reactors which were built in the USSR. Reactor No. 4 at Chernobyl was not the only reactor with built-in design defects and faults in safety system. All other dozens or so RBMK reactors, which provide more than 60 per cent of nuclear power in the USSR, were/are inherently defective.

The cover-up of the main fault could not, however, remain hidden for long, and as the classified technical enquiries and investigation were udertaken during 1987-88, the design faults of the reactor exposed the basic lack of safety in the *RMBK*. In 1988, the Soviet Government took the painful decision of cancelling construction of all new reactors, and to freeze all those that were under construction. Medvedev, on the basis of enormous amount of scientific information, and direct and indirect research material, concludes that the *Chernobyl catastrophy was born not so much of technology, as much of secrecy and of the habit of nuclear establishment and the governmental officiials, of covering up unpleasant news.*

A LESSON FOR INDIA : KEEP THE PUBLIC & PARLIAMENT INFORMED

The Chernobyl disaster has a lesson, particularly for Indian nuclear establishment, which has been guilty of suppressing scientific information from the public and parliament. Even after the Chernobyl disaster. The Indian Department of Atomic Energy released a volume entitled : *Nuclear Energy Is Safe*, written by the then chairman of Atomic Energy Commission. However, there are many design defects and manufacturing faults in our CANDU reactors, which have not been officially acknowledged.

FOR LABOUR 'VICTORY'

The paramount responsibility, admittedly, rests with the political rulers who, in the eagerness of proclaiming the scientific achievements, pushed the engineers and the tech-

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nocrats to commission the imperfectly designed and faulty reactors. In March, 1984, it was reported that the 1 million kilowatt energy Unit 4 of the Chernobyl plan, had been made a commercial operation two months ahead of schedule. On 10 March 1984, the Central Commmittee and Council of Ministers of the USSR, congratulated all workers, engineers and operators of the Chernobyl plan, for reducing the period between the physical launch and full commercial operation ! It was the 'Labour' victory ! But the fact is that the special commission which was to inspect and test N– power systems, had not completed all the necessary tests, when the Chernobyl 4 was permitted to operate on 31 Decemper 1983, to meet the schedule in the Soviet Communist Party's National Energy Planning. Thousands of workers, engineers, top officials in the ministries and committees would have lost bonuses, awards, and other extras, if the Unit 4 was not operational by that date.

A TEST ON D--DAY

On the disaster day, 26 April 1986, the experiment that was attempted, was in fact, part of the tests which had been left incomplete, but was supposed to have been done before licensing the Chernobyl 4 for normal commercial operation.

Minor mishaps, accidents and unusual occurrences are normal in High Risk Technologies. But core melt-down is the ultimate accident, which results due to a sudden loss of cooling water through the reactor core. And this can occur in less than 3 seconds (*Seconds, not minutes !*). The ultimate nightmare of nuclear power produces mono-elemental particles of pure Ruthenium (Ru-103 and Ru-106). The Chernobyl plume contained particles of Ruthenium; and as Ru. has a melting poing of 2,250 degree of centigrade, it is evident that the reactor core must have reached this temperature.

Nuclear authorities in most countries had/have claimed that their own nuclear plants were/are not prone to this type of disaster. But Medvedev refutes all such claims, and insists that consequences of run-away chain rection of Uranium- 235 caused the melt-down disaster, and in effect, a slow nuclear explosion had occured so powerful that it had destroyed the reactor instantly. "It would probably have breached any modern containment vessel; there is no effective protection against a nuclear explosion", concludes Medvedev.

SAFE & ECONOMIC REACTORS – WISHFUL THINKING ?

The Medvedev volume contains enormous amount of scientific data on the environmental impact of Chernobyl in various countries and description of the structure and the inner core of the reactors.

The development and construction of entirely safe reactors which are economical is a wishful thinking which might never be realised. The hope of 'economically viable' nuclear power supply was based on 'breeder reactor' which has not materialised. The US, the UK, Japan, the USSR and Germany have given up their breeder-reactor projects.

It is still to early to assess the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster, since the radionnuclide composition of the melted core fuel elements, contained *plutonium* among many other radioactive products, and since plutonium and strontium remain fixed in the body for decades. It is evidently clear, as Medvedev confirms, that the medical history of Chernobyl will continue into the next century.

Professor Dhirendra Sharma, author of controversial book 'India's Nuclear Estate', is Hon. Director of Centre For Asian Science and Industrial Policy Research, and teaches Science Policy at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

AFRO - ASIAN BOOK COUNCIL

PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES AUGUST 1991 TO FEBRUARY 1992

I. Book Exhibitions

1. Participation in Malaysian Book Fair, Kuala Lumpur (9 to 18 August 1991)
2. Participation in the Singapore Book Fair and Festival, Singapore (31 August to 9 September 1991)
3. Organisation of a Special Book Exhibition of Scientific and Technical Books, Mauritius (28 to 31 October 1991) leading to a permanent exhibit of AABC Collection.
4. Participation in Zimbabwe International Book Fair, Harare (19 to 24 August 1991)
5. Launching of Gandhi -- Mandela Pavilion with a collection of outstanding Afro-Asian Books, New Delhi (2 October 1991)
6. Participation in Frankfurt International Book Fair, Frankfurt (9 to 14 October 1991)
7. Organisation of Special Book Exhibitions in Kenya, Ethiopia and USA (dates not yetr fixed)
8. Participation in 10th New Delhi World Book Fair, New Delhi (1 to 9 February 1992)

II. Workshops and Training Courses

1. Author Development Workshop in Lahore in collaboration with the National Book Council of Pakistan (dates under negotiation)
2. Author Development Workshop in Kenya, Nairobi (dates under negotiation)
3. A Special Training Course for the Book Industry Trainers in collaboraion with GTZ (German Technical Cooperation Agency) (dates and venue under negotiation)

III. Conferences and Meetings

1. Participation in the UNESCO Regional Consultation for setting up a network for APPREB (Asia Pacific Programme for Reading Promotion and Book Development), Kuala Lumpur, (December 1991)
2. Organisation of the Second Annual General Meeting of the Afro-Asian Book Council, New Delhi (7 February 1992)
3. Organisation of the Third Afro-Asian Publishing Conference, New Delhi, (8 and 9 February 1992)

IV. National Chapters

Proposals for setting up National Chapters of the Afro-Asian Book Council in Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Kenya and Nigeria under consideration.

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MOODS & MOVEMENTS OF A SYMPHONY

Prem Kirpal : MIND AND MODES
Pitambar Publishing Compay, New Delhi: pp. 106: Price Rs. 60/-

Review by Man Mohan Singh

Prem Kirpal is more of a poetic cascade on the literary landscape of Delhi. Images and metaphors fall from his lips in an unending bounty. This time I chose to communicate with him on his poetic credo.

His life, he told me, is in his poems. He conceptualised the difference between prose and poetry in that while poetry celebrated, prose merely stated. He admitted that his being a painter helped him play with colours that take forms and shapes as circles and lines. In his view, poetry is like worship, and that is why he asserted that it was relevant to the tension- ridden contemporary human scenario.

POETIC MOSAIC LIKE A SYMPHONY

His latest compilation of poetry, *Minds and Modes,* fits like a missing piece in the poetic mosaic of the author. This sequence of poems, unlike his earlier emotional articulations, deals with some profound philosophical concepts. The sheer range of themes covered is stupendous.

One just cannot help being impressed by the musical architecture of this book. It is patterned more like a symphony with its sequential movements. It begins with "A New Year Vista" as a poetic overture, acquiring towards the second part of the book a lyrical pace. In the third stage, it deals with memories of childhood, of flying like a bird along "Course Unknown", and reaches its finale, as if, in the rondo musical form in a quick succession of images and journeys to Paro, Jaipur and Switzerland. The *liet motif* as if it were of this anthology is the statement of philosophical paradoxes and their resolution. In the very first poem, the cosmic is perceived in mind's consciousness through the fire of "Kundalini" and the "Third Eye". In another poem "Heart and Mind", the poet sits in judgement over a dispute between emotion and reason. Their quarrel is resolved by both of them making a joint statement:-

Heart and Mind spoke in unison
singing the song of life:
"For the breath and feel of life,
its expression and potentials
of joy and creation.
we belong to each other".

The poet has to don the judge's wig through many recurring conceptual contentions. He lets the contending parties state their cases and at the end, resolves the dispute invariably in a conceptual consensus.

WHEN THE TWAIN MEET

For him, East and West are not the twain that shall never meet. He reconciles disparate civilisatioons and cultures,as in his poem "East and West ":

When East meets West,
on the Rhine or the Ganga
on the Himalayan heights
or the Alpine vales
there is some fruitful encounter
of thought and emotions,
of dreams and deeds
traditions and innovations.

POETIC FUSION

The same capacity to achieve a poetic fusion is evident in reconciling life and eternity; time and space; birth and death. In a poetic image of tremendous intensity, life and eternity, though contrasted, merge as shadows on the sea in these words:

Life's shadows lengthen in the trail of time
to merge in the Sea of Enternity
when the Sun of Life in its golden glory
dips softly into the Vibrant Sea.

AFRAID NO MORE

In another recurring theme of death, the poet seems to overcome its sting and seems afraid no more. Life is like a bride meeting death, the groom, in a wedding celebration. In yet another image, death appears as a gardner:

to gather faded flowers
blown by the winds of autumn
will he sing a tune
and whistle gaily?

UNITY OF TRINITIES

Apart from the bilateral contentions, there are trilateral disputes too in a sequence of poems called "The Trinities." Ego, Soul and Psyche and later on, Knowledge, Wisdom and Vision state their cases through the poet with Time, Space and Enternity singing in chorus in "Final Word". The first two poetic cases are resolved by the trio in a celebration of unity in trinity. Time, Space and Eternity hold hands together and fade out of the poet's court with a musical reconciliation:

Together we evolve all life,
sustain and create all potentials,
experience and enrich consciousness
for the contemplation of Divinity.
The mortal merges with the immortal.
Our measures of time and space
merge with the measureless eternal
for a sublime song of Unity !

BIRD IMAGES & SYMBOLS

In this rainbow like poetic spectrum, there are bird images too. The first bird to figure in this anthology is the flying kite. That sympolises "Aspirations to Touch the Sky." The owl finds a place in "Antibiotics." The owl and the saint are both visually depicted in a posture of "Blissful Stillness." In yet another image of the owl, the poet contrasts his own situation of being stuffed with antibiotics sitting and staring like an owl, "without the owl's inner intensity." The owl normally described by ornithologists as a predator bird, hunting rodents and reptiles by the night, is transformed

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into a brooding Bird of Wisdom in this poetic metamorphosis.

NATURE POET & PAINTER

Apart from the birds, there are a munber of recurring images of Nature. In "A Killing", when a young widow wails, the dark and cold sky shares the sorrow as raindrops moan in muffled sound. In yet another poem, "Children's Hunger", the sun is smiling and the sea waves dance as famished children stare blankly at the vast seashore. In another solar image, the sun appears resplendent in its radiant glory:

Surya envelops the valley
lighting up its landscapes;
the forests are in slumber
in the stillness of the morning.

As a painter, the poet etches a riverscape in "Journey to Paro" in large strokes:

A swollen half-moon with a lama inside
stares at Paro's quiet countryside
studded with hills, rocks and pines,
peasants' huts and monastic lights
with a singing river flowing in the vale
of willows and fruit-trees resting in dale.

In yet another image, "Man and Monument", the static and the dynamic forms of life are depicted in an, image of movement:

Trees, flowers and leaves,
birds, squirrels and children
run, play and frolic
in the spirit of the spring.

A RIPPLE OF WIT, FAITH & REVOLUTION OF SOUL

The apparently sombre surface and depth of this poetic flow are relieved by a ripple of wit in "The Minister's Audience." Not that the Kings were the only potentates who had their courts. The ministers have them too:

When the Minister arrived, his audience stood up
and rendered homage with folded hands.
He sat in his chair, belched loudly and yawned
with a superior smile on his thick-set lips.

All eyes rested on his beaming visage,
all ears waited for pearls from his mouth;
and when he did at last open his mouth
all courtries hailed the words he had not said.

What, however, emerges triumphantly from this book is the poet's unfailing faith in the basic goodness of man. His concept of God is free from suffocating rituals as he urges:

Let us liberate Self and God
from the cages and prisons
designed by fear, greed and ignorance
of the Selves lost in Maya
alienated from God's glory
and the reality of being
toward constant becoming.

This is what is blown by the poet in his trumpted words in "The Revolution of the Soul" towards the end of this anthology. He believes in a Revolution of the Soul that would:

govern the flow of life
and transform the lonesome psyche
from the temporal to the divine
and lift consciousness from earth
to the Cosmos beyond Space and Time.

This anthology by a prolific voice of Delhi is less of a book; it indeed is more of an incredible poetic marvel.

Mr. Man Mohan Singh is Joint Secretary in the Department of Culture, Ministry of Human Resource Development, New Delhi.

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THREE MOODS – THREE POEMS

by Prem Kirpal

Poet, painter, educationist and a man of culture, Prof P.N. Kirpal has offered us three more musings:

THE WAY

From being to non-being
on the way to becoming
takes the self to selflessness
and the soul to resplendence
from the mirage of existence
to the reality and essence
of life in this life
and the here-after of time,
in the Union of being
with non-being.

The way to Existence
lies through non-existence.
The fullness of life
is experienced in the void
of vast Emptiness
in which sub-sides
all space rolled together
and time cast in lumber
of fragments and moments
from the domain of existence.

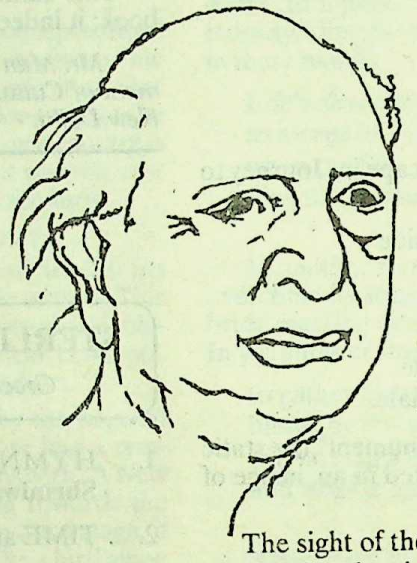
Time and space weave together
the Tapestry of living
on the scroll of history
with thought and memory
in the probing of the past
and understanding of the present
for peeps into the future
which is both past and present
in time rolled together
from being to non-being
in the essence of becoming !

(12.6.90)

PUNJAB AND KASHMIR

Mistrust and suspicion,
ill-will and fear
among people and neighbours
living long together
have corroded Society
and vitiated the nation,
in the gloom of the present
and darkness of the future,
condemned to confusion
and painful vivisection.

There are no responsible leaders,
wise guides and mentors,
skilful Surgeons
to correct the Community
into new harmonies
of kindly neighbourhood,
good-will and tolerance,
reverence of religion,
and respect of Tradition
for a great new Society !



Soldiers and Terrorists
politicians and bureaucrats
fanatics of religion
and secret conspiratiors
rule the roost
devoid of Security
and protection of the weak
in their homes and hearths.
I see no ray of hope
no light of new faith.
Perhaps some miracle
may soon be ablaee !

(16.6.90)

THE COFFEEE -- BREAK

The sight of the Coffee Break cup
showing dancing figures and flowers
at eleven of clock of the day
always cheers and inspires.
The heavenly brew is sipped in peace
in autonomy of thought and feels
about whatever comes to my mind
and glimpses of kites flown in the past.

The mid-morning of the day
two hours away from lunch time
and two hours after breakfast
is a golden pause in day's routine.

I feel like chatty Confucius or the wise Buddha,
dear dopy Ghalib or brash Willy of Avon,
Joker, saint or fake sage -
and let imagination fly !

Coffee brew and eager palate
tuned to the magical hour
of the sweet longed-for eleven of clock
orchestrate and meditate.

Quite unplanned and out of the blue
With Guchchi staring at my visage
gems of thought and lyrical lines
are penned at Coffee Break of day:

(18.6.90)

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PRELUDE AND LEGACIES OF PARTITION

A Seminar Report by Rajan Mahan

A three-day seminar (from March 7 to 9, 1991) hosted by the South Asia Studies Centre, University of Rajasthan, on a sensitive subject of seminal significance, **prelude and legacies of partition,** was attended by some distinguished scholars from India and abroad (including two from Pakistan).

The seminar got off to a dignified and impressive start through an erudite innaugural address by the Governor of Rajasthan, Prof. D.P. Chattopadhyaya, which set the tone for the deliberations that were to follow. He dealt at length with the concept of history, the process of history-formation; traced the major trends of historiography and analysed the phenomenon of historical causation. *Vis a vis*, the vivisection of the sub- continent, Prof. Chattopadhyaya referred to a variety of hypotheses and emphasised the imperative need to unravel the 'truth' so that apposite lessons for the future could be drawn from historical experience for the establishment of harmonious relations between the contending communities and nations.

The seminar had six working sessions, each devoted to a significant aspect of the partition theme. The opening session on 'Historiography of Partition' was followed by a session each on the 'National Movement', 'Communal Politics', 'Literary Reflections,' 'Economic Dimensions and finally one session concentrated upon the 'Legacies' rooted in the division of the sub-Continent. In a brief report such as this, obviously it is not possible to do justice to each of the papers presented in the sessions. The endeavour, therefore, is to focus upon some broad themes and issues which provoked lively debate and discussions and evinced considerable differences of opinion, as a means to encapsulate the flavour and fervour of the seminar.

WHY PARTITION?

What caused the partition ? Around this fundamental query revolved much of the discussion in the various sessions.

Divergent explanations were offered for this tragic development. The contention that the partition was an evil gift of imperialist intrigue was often forwarded. Upholders of this view argued that partition was the logical outcome of the British policy of *Divide and Rule* which eventually climaxed in the deliberate and devious decision to *Divide and Quit* as the best means to safeguard their vested interest in an uncertain future. While this 'conspiracy theory' found much popular sympathy, it was also emphasized that this theory provided only a partial and incomplete explanation which, though not false, was cetainly a narrow and somewhat simplistic view of a complex phenomenon like the partition.

Invevitably, the Indian national movement came under critical scrutiny. In particular, considerable light was shed upon the weaknesses of the Congress-led nationalist struggle. These included – the shortcomings of Gandhian mobilisation of masses, resulting in the continuance of elite – mass dichotomies culminating in the failure to resist communal pressures; the inability of nationalists to evolve an effective, long-term strategy to check the communal monster; and their blinkered vision resulting in the refusal to face up to the unpleasant reality until too late. All these, along with the gradual and fatal alienation of the Muslims, were frequently lamented and highlighted, as scholars attempted to remove the cobweb of confusion surrounding the cataclysmic sundering of the sub-continent.

THE TWO NATIONS' THEORY

Not surprisingly, the 'Two Nations Theory' evoked sharp controversy. This powerful, though dubious, theory is emphatic that the Muslims (in India) were always a 'distinct and separate community' who were never adequately assimilated into their Indian environment. And, since the Muslims invariably adhered to their 'particularistic traditions,' the theory argues that India had always contained the seeds of two separate nations. The genesis and growth of this explanation was examined at the seminar with particular reference to the roles of Sir Saiyd Ahmad Khan, Allama Iqbal and Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

In this connection, the allied imperialist view which focusses on the plurality of Indian society and depicts its fractiousness as the dominant reality of the Indian socio-cultural situation, also provoked much discussion. It was noted that although this version provides an apparent legitmacy to the 'two nations theory', we must beware of the insidious motives which underpin this curious and contentions interpretation, the latent desire being not only to debunk Indian nationalism (as being the product of 'elite' intrigues to protect their selfish interests rather than being inspired by any patriotic sentiment) but also to establish that the British Raj, far from being a divisive factor, was in reality, a unifying and integrating force.

The manner in which the imperialists consistently instigated, encouraged and exploited the communal elements also generated animated discussion in the seminar. While analysing the steady accentuation of the communal situation, the chief focus was on post - 1937 developments. The mistakes and errors of judgement, some acts of omission and commission, the blunders of tactics and strategy, and the lapses of oversight and subsequent regrets over missed 'golden' opportunities (along with the vicious calculations and motivations of interests on all sides) all these games and manipulations were variously articulated at the seminar. In examining 'the *micro* aspects of the communal prelude to partition', much attention was centered on the August 1946 Calcutta Carnage, which left not only a deep imprint on the social fabric of the metropolis, but also entailed singificant consequences for the rest of the sub-Continent. Hereafter, it was felt, the sub-Continent began to spin into a violent vortex of convulsions whereby partition became unaboidable.

JINNAH & GANDHI

The respective roles of individual leaders also came under close surveillance. Although Sir Saiyid Ahmed Khan, Allama Iqbal and Jawaharlal Nehru, among many others,

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A SPECIAL SECTION

PRELUDE & LEGACIES OF PARTITION

were debated on occasion, the maximum heat was generated around the roles and personalities of Mohammad Ali Jinnah and Mahatma Gandhi.

Jinnah's temperamental personality, his early career as an 'ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity', his various personal and political disappointments, his role in shaping the Muslim demand for 'autonomy', which was utilised to secure concessions and eventually paved the way to partition, as also his shrewd projection of the Muslim League as the '*sole* representative' and himself as the '*sole* spokesman' of Muslim interests – all these evoked a *great* deal of comment and controversy.

Gandhi's role, too, came under heavy fire with several seminarists questioning why the Mahatma failed to launch a mass movement to stem or quell the tide of separatism and partition. In this context, a spirited defence was presented by Dr. B.R. Nanda, one of the most distinguished and outstanding Gandhi scholars. He argued that Gandhi's final acceptance of the partition was in consonance with his instinctive 'feel' for the 'pulse of the people'. Although Gandhi did sometimes 'create' situations, Nanda asserted that these, in reality, cannot be created at will or *de novo*. After all, he argued, the launching of a movement/satyagraha by Gandhi (or any other leader, for that matter) was not through some magic wand; rather it depended essentially upon the 'strength of the people'. As such, Gandhi's reluctant acquiescence to partition was not only a consequence of the worsening of the Indian situation by the widespread nation-wide riots of 1946-47, but also a recognition of the unfortunate truth that, the people were no longer in agreement with his opposition to this tragic vivisection.

ECONOMIC DIMENSIONS

The economic dimensions of partition were also explored at the seminar. A perceptive presentation was made by Prof. Manzooruddin Ahmad, former Vice Chancellor of Karachi University, entitled 'Roots of Pakistan: A Socio-Economic Analysis'. He made a detailed examination of the rise of a middle class during the Raj era. He elaborated on the implications of this development, and linked up the partition with 'elite – mass' dichotomies. He argued that the real conflict was among the elites, who were struggling to secure a popular sanction for their narrow struggle. They sought the support of the 'miserable masses' who fell prey to the idea or dream of promise that 'Pakistan' would be a 'Paradise', where all their problems would automatically disappear, as if by magic! In this session, stress was also laid upon investigating the complex infra-structural developments which had occurred under British rule, to discover the 'gainers' and 'losers' of these curious developments, and to identify the economic consequences which the partition with all its destruction and dislocation in its wake necessarily entailed.

HISTORY & LITERATURE

Stimulating discussions were also held around the themes of Historiography and Literary Reflections on Partition. The historiographic survey not only reviewed the achievements and limitations of the existing literature, but also pointed out the emerging trends and interpretations. The basic endeavour was to identify those areas which had received inadequate attention so far, and to exhort scholars to undertake 'sustained and dispassionate' research on several sensitive issues related to the partition. Particularly useful information in this context was provided by Dr. Waheed Ahmad, Director, Quaid-i-Azam Academy, Karachi, who not only gave a graphic account of how major Pakistan scholars look at partition, but also pointed out some fresh material about the roles and activities of Quaide Azam Jinnah and the Mulsim League, which has so far been little known in India.

The session on literary reflections focussed chiefly on novels written in English by Indian and British authors. Especially insightful was the paper read by Prof. Robin Moore entitled 'Paul Scott and the Partition of India'. The well-known Australian scholar concertrated upon Scott's famous novel sequence: *The Raj Quartet,* which includes *The Jewel in the Crown (1966), The Day of the Scorpion (1968), The Towers of Silence (1971)* and *A Division of the Spoils (1975)*. Arguing that Scott's *Quartet* invites appraisal as history (fictionalised history) Prof. Moore claimed that Scott's major achievement lay in the skilful manner in which he exposed the 'Mechanics of the Raj.' Prof. Moore contended that Scott assisted in an extension of historical understanding by linking how the 'mechanics of the Raj' contributed to the ultimate *denouement* of 1946-47.

A lamentable feature of this session, however, was the near-absence of any analysis of trends in regional literatures around the partition theme, notwithstanding an impassioned presentation of the poetry of Kazi Nazrul Islam.

SOME OTHER ASPECTS

A brief mention may also be made of some other significant presentations, as a means to convey not only the diversity but also the originality of the contributions at the seminar. Thus, while a senior, left-oriented historian regretted the 'tragedy of a lost initiative by the Indian Left' (taken during 1940-41) which, in his view, could have averted the partition, another distinguished doyen dilated upon a dimension generally overlooked in the partition debate (*viz.,* the role of the princely States) and argued that the marginalisation of the Indian States from the late 1930s was an outcome of a deliberate design of the imperialists.

Likewise, a young scholar provided a refreshing re-interpretation of the 1940's, which stressed that the second world war had precipitated a crisis for the state structure in India. It was asserted that the war had seriously enfeebled the state, and in this vulnerable phase, the spiralling communal riots appeared to threaten the very existence of the state. As such, it was to preserve and secure the stability of the state that power was transferred, although the state itself was split up into two, forming India and Pakistan

LEGACIES ?

While the '*Prelude* to partition' was thus analysed in depth, the '*Legacies*' thereof were investigated only in the final session. Discussion chiefly revolved around the failure to evolve a liberal democracy in Pakistan. This was largely a consequence of a percipient presentation which established linkages between the inability to develop a democratic polity in sovereign Pakistan with the campaign which culminated in its creation as an independent nation-

(Continued on page 32)

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CAN RELIGION ALONE MAKE A VIABLE STATE ?

Pandav Nayak (Ed.) PAKISTAN–DILEMMAS OF A DEVELOPING STATE
Aalekh Publishers, Jaipur; pp. 252, Rs. 150/-

Review by Asghar Ali Engineer

Pakistan is much more than our neighbouring country. It was, before 1947, an integrgral part of India. It separated from us and this separation caused a great deal of conflict and aroused deepest passion. The separation was paintful like cutting of any "body organ", and this pain is still felt, as wounds do not seem to be healing. Perhaps wounds inflicted on the body politic take much longer to heal. What is worse, when it begins to heal, another wound is inflicted on the dictates of politicians on either side of the divide; and old wounds also begin to fester.

Whatever the case, the scholars, academics and political scientists have to study and analyse Pakistani society. Such studies are important for reasons more than one. Firstly, we must try to understand our neighbour. Secondly, we have close ethnic, racial and cultural affinities; and thirdly, it is only objective study and dispassionate analysis which will bring us closer to each other and promote constructive dialogue. Any objective study of Pakistan is, therefore, most welcome.

The present book, edited by Dr. Pandav Nayak is one such welcome contribution which will help understand the politics and society of Pakistan better. In all, 17 scholars of India and abroad drawn from various disciplines have contributed to this volume.

The volume deals with varied subjects like Ideology of Pakistan, Problems of Secularism, Rural Development, the PPP phase (under Zulfikar Ali Bhutto), General Zia's phase, U.S. Arms to Pakistan, Security Dilemmas of Pakistan, Indo-Pak Trade, Pakistan and the Muslim World, Pak-Afghan Relations in the context of super-power politics and Pakistan's nuclear dilemma. The range of the book is quite wide indeed, though the quality of contributions is not even. Also, the book was published in 1985 and is naturally dated. Much water has flown down the Ganges and the Indus, Ravi and Chenab since then. However, many contributions are valuable and have not been affected much, despite many changes that have occurred in these two countries ever since.

CAN A COMMON RELIGION MAKE A VIABLE NATION ?

Anwar H. Syed's "The Idea of Pakistani Nationhood" is an historical piece and retains its value. It is important to note that even after more than four decades of existence of Pakistan, the question of Pakistani nationhood remains unresolved. There were many contradictions in the demand for a 'Muslim Homeland' as Pakistan was then called. The most seminal question was: Can a viable nation be formed merely on the basis of commonality of religion or does it take more than a religion for a nation to survive ? It is now history that Pakistan did not survive as a nation on the basis of religion alone, as the Bengali Muslims, asserting their Bengali identity, chose to separate from Pakistan. India, on the other hand, opted for secular nationalism and is still surviving as a nation, though it has much greater ethnic and religious diversity. However, it must be asserted that regional identities are asserting themselves and intense conflict has arisen in Panjab, Kashmir and Assam.

Mr. Anwar Syed raises some important questions regarding Muslim nationalism. Any Muslim can be a citizen of any Muslim country, if this idea is accepted. However, no Muslim from Pakistan will be permitted to be citizen of Iran or Saudi Arabia, just because he/she happens to be a Muslim. Second, Muslim nationalism tends to legitimise the *status quo* in the distribution of political power and economic advantage. Since all are Muslims, and since regional distinctions are not only irrelevant but pernicious, it does not matter that Punjabis and Pathans, rather than Sindhis and Baluchis, are dominant. Third, Muslim nationalism may turn out to be undemocratic. Its proponents may claim, at the opportune time, that only men of God, the righteous, can be entrusted with establishing God's kingdom in Pakistan. This would exclude most of the current politicians and their constituents from significant participation.

These are important questions and need to be debated. With the passage of the Shari'at Bill by the National Assembly of Pakistan, the last possibility is threatening to be real. Pakistani society is facing serious contradictions which the present rulers find extremely difficult to resolve. The Islamic politics is continuously reinforcing *status quo*, and modern economic bind today. The situation is getting more and more complicated.

SECULARISM IN PAKISTAN

In the next chapter, Kalim Bahadur has also ably dealt with the related problem of secularism. Mr. Bahadur points out that Jinnah was very vague as regards what ideals the Muslims had. But he did not name Islamic society as an ideal society and his ommission could not but be deliberate. In fact, Jinnah, right from the Khilafat days, was against politics being mixed with religion and his participation in the Khilafat Movement was half-hearted and nominal. As long as he was alive, Pakistan could not be declared even an Islamic state. The Objectives Resolution, incorporating Islam as the state religion of Pakistan was passed after his death. The military-bureaucratic alliance during the Ayub and Yahya regimes also did not bother much about Islam; and Islam never became a real constituency in Pakistani politics until Gen. Zia-ul-Haq usurped power. Though in the pre-Zia period too, it would be problematic to describe Pakistan as a secular state, religious laws never played seminal role in the governance of Pakistan. Ayub even introduced changes in Muslim Personal Law by promulgating the Family Ordinance in 1962.

Kalim Bahadur has surveyed developments in Pakistan politics until Zia's regime to examine the problem of secularism in Pakistan. He then concludes, "Gen. Zia's regime is a threat (blow) to secularism in Pakistan. After the radical rhetoric of the Bhutto era which had created a scare not only among the Western imperialist circles but also among the explaiting classes in Pakistan, Gen. Zia has come as a boon to them."

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RURAL DEVELOPMENT

P.C. Mathur deals with the problem of rural development in Pakistan and poses the question whether rural development is possible without political development. In this article, Mathur has collected vital statistics on rural development. He feels that "The landlords of Pakistan have had, therefore, a long favourable innings in an economic sense; but can they look forward to an uninterrupted domination of Pakistani economy in the years to come ?" Much, of course, would depend on political developments in that country. The innings may remain favourable for landlords politically, if not economically, as the share of agriculture in Pakistani GNP is declining, having touched its peak long ago. However, Islamisation of politics would reinforce *status quo*, which even an industrialist Prime Minister like Nawaz Sharif will find it difficult to break. Nawaz Sharif today may try to encourage capitalist development, but having chosen Islam as his constituency and having played an instrumental role in getting the Shariat Bill approved, he may find it difficult to restrain mullahs who, to a large extent, depend on landlord patronage. It would be difficult for him to break the nexus between landlords, military and bureaucracy.

ECONOMY UNDER & SINCE BHUTTO

Pandav Nayak, editor of the book, has contributed a significant piece antitled "Growth-Theoretic Context of the State of Pakistan: The PPP Phase". He too gives lot of vital statistics on Pakistan economy. Dr. Nayak had done his doctoral thesis on political economy of Pakistani and is thus much better informed about Pakistani economy than many other scholars. It is a highly critical analysis of economic policies followed by the Bhutto regime during the seventies.

Dr. Nayak feels that "... Pakistan is being groomed as a *plaidover* of the desert West Asia, particularly in line with the general theme of development of Pakistan, which is that it is externally induced and internally carried out by a select few under the protection of the state. The common Pakistanis who constitute 77 per cent of the total population and are below the national average of Rs. 271/- have neither any say in what is produced nor any share from what he produces for his state."

Well, there is truth in what Dr. Nayak says, but it may be difficult to go whole hog with him specially in the light of latter developments which took place in Pakistan in the post . --1985 period.

SEARCH FOR SURVIVAL & LEGITIMACY

Surendra Nath Kaushik's piece "General Zia's Quest for Survival" is quite comprehensive and deals with military, religious and economic aspects of the Zia regime in Pakistan and his search for legitimation. It is Zia who created real constituency for the military in Pakistan. It no longer remained incidental, but acquired legitimised institutional role for itself. For some time to come, at least, no ruling party can afford to ignore military top brass's amibitions and aspirations. It would remain a serious limitation on the democratic aspirations of the people of Pakistan.

STRATEGIC OPTIONS

Prof. K.R. Singh deals with geo-political environment and strategic options of Pakistan. Singh makes a perceptive observation when he says, "The ticklish international environment, however, took yet another dramatic turn in 1978-79, when two of the major planks of the Pakistani security system, the Shah's Regime in Iran and the Daud Government in Afghanistan, collapsed suddenly. The results were far reaching." What Dr. Singh says is entirely true, but the Pakistani rulers did succeed in turning this precarious situation to their advantage, at least on the Afghan front. After Russia intervened militarily in Afghnistan, Zia not only got a new lease of life, but also got the bonanza of arms from America. The developments in Iran too increased the strategic importance of Pakistan for America's geo-political interests.

Next, Selig Harrison deals with South Asian situation in his ably argued article "Fanning Flames in South Asia". Again, our problem is that much has changed since the article was written, though its basic frame-work remains sound.

Mr. Harrison takes a comprehensive view of interests of India and Pakistan in dealing with the problems in South Asia. He says that "... India has responded with knee-jerk negativism to Zia's overtures for a non-aggression agreement and for negotiations on force level ratios and forces disengagement. Indian officials argue that a non-aggression agreement with Pakistan would be meaningless as long as the Kashmir dispute persists. These officials contend that Pakistan should agree to convert the current cease-fire line in Kashmir into a *de jure* international boundary as an accompaniment to a non-aggression pact."

With the developments in Kashmir, the Indian position is borne out to a large extent with a proviso, of course, that the Central Government in India also played a role in exacerbating the conflict in Kashmir by trying to control Kashmir politics, thus reducing its autonomy and offending the feelings of the Kashmiri people.

INDO-PAK TRADE & THE MUSLIM WORLD

Mani Shankar Aiyar and R.Viswanatha have dealt with Indo-Pak trade both in retrospect and prospect. The article, needless to say, is rich in data. The article would be found quite useful for those interested in Indo-Pak trade.

Gulshan Dhanani has thrown light on Pakistan's search for a new role in the Muslim world. Dhanani rightly points out that "the Muslim world is an immensely complicated and strife-torn area." To find an acceptable role in such a situation is no less complicated an affair. Zia did try to create, through the use of orthodox Islam, viable influence in Saudi Arabia. However, he found it difficult to establish trouble-free relations with Iran. Its 21 per cent Shia population was not happy with Sunni Hanafi Islam of Zia.ul-Haq. It even resented imposition of *zakat*, which was being done under the Hanafi law. Morever, Zia had a pro-American orientation and Khomeini denounced America as a 'great Shaitan'. Pakistan had hardly any influence with African Islamic countries like Egypt, Sudan, Algeria, Morocco etc., with the exception of Libya.

Though somewhat dated, the book is extremely useful in many respects and retains its utility even today in more ways than one. It has a number of quite useful articles.

Dr. Asghar Ali Engineer, Director, Institute of Islamic Studies, Bombay is a well-known scholar and author.

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PARTITION OR PAKISTAN -- Who Wanted It ?

Ayesha Jalal : THE SOLE SPOKESMAN

A Comment by Madan Gupta

In her book *The Sole Spokesman,* Ayesha Jalal posed the question: How did a Pakistan come about which fitted the interests of most Muslims so poorly. She proceeded to find an answer, for which she analysed the political developments of the time, including the pronouncomment of Jinnah's Two-Nations theory and the demand for Pakistan. But she maintains that these were tactics used by Jinnah to get the Indian Muslims, who formed a sizeale minority, an equal status in managing Indian affairs. To support her argument, she has stated that this was the reason why Jinnah never defined his concept of Pakistan. She has concluded that "it was Congress that insisted on Partition. It was Jinnah who was against Partition."

How she reached this conclusion, even on the basis of facts enumerated by her, is baffling.

Any objective study of events which led to India's Partition would show that the Congress had spearheaded the country's struggle for freedom and had also stoutly resisted, till the very end, any proposal to divide the country. Jinnah on the other hand, maintained at least during the later part of his public career, that Indian Muslims were a separate nation, and in the end, he fiercely advocated the creation of Pakistan. Jinnah's *major domo* Liaquat Ali Khan is on record that he would "sooner have a few acres of Sindh desert", provided it was his very own," rather have a united India with a majority rule".

As far as the Indian National Congress is concerned, having failed to dissuade Jinnah and the British from partitioning India, their only option was to accept partition as a 'price' for freedom. No wonder, Krishana Menon said a to Mountbatten: "If Mr. Jinnah wants a total seperation, and that straight away, and if we agree to it for the sake of peace and dismember our country, we want to be rid of him, so far as the affairs of what is left to us of our country are concerned..." All this cannot, by any stretch of imagination, be construed as Congress desire for partition, as Ms Jalal implied.

Jinnah's interview with Mountbatten in April 1947, in which he begged the Viceroy "not to destroy the unity of Bengal and the Panjab, which had national characteristics in common history, common ways of life and where the Hindus have stronger feelings as Bengalis and Panjabis...", was no more than a gamble or a last ditch battle to grab the whole of the Panjab and Bengal. He banked on the British to give him a 'favoured-child' treatment, which he had become used to. For once the dice did not fall in his favour.

Ms Jalal's contention that Jinnah did not want partition and that the Congress was responsible for it is thus illogical. Zeigler in *Mountabatten* is closer to the truth when he says: "Jinnah used negativism to achieve positive ends; by saying no, he inexorably closed all avenues except the one leading to the only affirmative he would accept -- an independent Pakistan". He goes on to say: "Mountbaten argued endlessly the case for a united India. Jinnah offered no counter arguments. He gave the impression that he was not listening. It was more than an impression; to all intents and purposes, he was not listening; he had made up his mind..."

Another aspect to be considered in this context is the personal ambition of Jinnah, which Ms. Jalal has not touched upon. Quite early in his political career, Jinnah had discovered that in the Congress, he could not have a dominating position. Shrewd and sharp as he was, he decided to establish a place for himself *outside* the Congress.

Towards the end, which was the climax of his political life, the Two-Nations Theory and the demand for Pakistan became his tools to create a bulwark against the Congress. By rallying the Muslims behind him and the rejuvenated Mushlim Leage on the promise of a "Land of the Pure", he established his sway over them and attained an unassailable position for himself in Indian politics. Having attained that position, it is inconceivable that he would have been satisfied with anything less than an independent Pakistan where he would be the Supremo. He knew that in united India, he could be nothing more than a second fiddle to Gandhi and Nehru, nothig more than a tiger without teeth, with claws neatly manicured. For a politician of limitless ambition like Jinnah, this would have been virtual political eclipse; and which politician will invite his own eclipse ?

Besides, he knew that once he got Pakistan, there was always scope to enlarge his empire by snatch and grab. This is exactly that he did.

Knowing Nehru's fondness for fair-play and knowing that while he was a hard-boiled, down-to earth,pragmatic politicain, his adversary was an emotional idealist, he let his tribal and irregular hordes march into Kashmir to occupy the State of J & K by force. But he had bad luck. In spite of its initial hesitancy, the Indian leadership of the day, at the nick of time, decided to accept Kashmir's accession to India and sent its troops to defeat Jinnah's plans. Rest is history ! Though this rash and dsperate adventure has left a trail of blood and tears behind on both sides of the ceasefite line and a lot of bitteress in the relations between India and Pakistan.

Though one may not agree with Ayesha Jalal's arguments,the book has been of particular interest for those who were witnesses to the morbid drama of partition enacted in 1947 and its unfortunate victims. Partition caused ruination of millions. Seldom in human history has such a heavy price in human suffering been paid for freedom, as India had to pay.

Mr. Madan Gupta is a frequent contributor – reviewer of this journal.

Note : *Ayesha Jalal's book has been reviewed in IBC in August 1986, (p. 187) by Dr. Asghar Ali. Engineer; and in the November-December 1986 issue (pages 251-252) by (late Shri Satindra Singh & (late) Dr. Moin Shakir.*

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THE DIRGE OF A WOUNDED SOUL

Tehmina Durrani: MY FEUDAL LORD
Reprinted by Sterling, (1991), New Delhi, pp. 365.,

Review by Amrik Singh

This book has received a lot of media attention. Excerpts from it have appeared in several Indian journals and it has also been reviewed in a number of places. In Pakistan where it was originally published, it has been , as they say, a runaway success. Whether it has also been translated into Urdu as well as the regional languages of Pakistan is not known, but it is the kind of book which deserves to be translated and known widely.

It is a deeply moving and painful story of a wife who was oppressed by a brute of a husband who was very prominent in public life. Obviously he has those talents which enabled him to project himself and wield power. Feudal in his make-up and outlook,he derived tremendous mileage from his social background. Unlike India where feudalism has collapsed to a large extent, in Pakistan the tone of social and political life is still feudal. In that setting, her husband flourished and still continues to occupy a somewhat prominent place.

CONTOURS OF HELL

What prompted the author to write this book ? As she puts it, she was aware that there were many perils in exposing her private life to a male-dominated society with crushing conservative sensibilities. While several autobiographies have chosn to be candid, what is distinctive about this book is not only its candour. The qualities that stand out are her honesty as well as her sense of detachment with which she writes. She has pulled no punches in describing the humiliation and torture that she went through. What happened during the decade-long stay in England, where both of them escaped from Gen. Zia's oppressive regime, is utterly chilling. One of her chapters entitled 'Contours of Hell' describes it with great power and vividness, and makes for compulsive reading.

The point about the book, however, is how having been almost pulverised by violence and the sapping of her will power, she has eventually had the courage not only to leave her husband, but also stand on her own feet. This book has been written partly to vindicate herself and partly to emerge from his baleful shadow.

Has she succeeded in doing so ? Not entirely. She has finally left him, but on one occasion when they met at lunch, she asked him how he saw her future. The husband's reply was devastating and needs to be reproduced :

> "Tehmina, you are nothing any more. You were once. When you were Begum Tehmina Mustafa Khar. Now you are just Tehmina Durrani. Even when you ring up people, you will have to introduce yourself as my ex-wife. You have no identity of your own. You have to tell people that you were married once to Mustafa Khar... People meet you because you have something interesting to say about me. You will exhaust your stock of stories very soon... then you will have nothing to say. After that you will lose all your so-called friends. They will be bored of you. Women will not let you come to their homes because they will be afraid of you. You are a threat to their marriages. Even if you think that you can work politicaly and enter the field you will be made to wait outside offices for hours. Because you have removed my name from your own."

Her comment is equally pertinent. She writes, "I came home with the words stinging in my ears. I re-thought my life, soared like a wounded bird for the last time and landed. Reality. "It is out of the recognition of that sense of reality that she has now written this book. It is the tale of a wouded soul and the dirge of someone who was sought to be destroyed, but escaped that attack on her integrity as a person.

A TESTIMONY TO HER FAITH

This book is a testimony to her faith in herself. To that extent, it is a triumph. But the issue is: what next ?

As her husband predicted, once her story is told, she would cease to be of much interest to people. When the echoes of this book die out, this is precisely the fate that awaits her.

In this connection, a reference to the Foreword to the book may be made. It is written by her lawyer, a pioneering woman who has made a place for herself in the social and judicial life of her country. As she puts it, "This book is not altogether an autobiography of one woman. It sketches the pains and burdens shared by millions of women in feudal societies."She goes to say that in writing this book, the author has tried to "break out of the prison she had created for herself". But the question is: will other women also be able to break out of the prison?

It is not essential that every woman should walk out on her husband. Sometimes such a step may become unavoidable, but surely that cannot be the norm. What is essential is that her dignity is not compromised and her self is not undermined. It is issues like these to which the author needs to address hereself now. This book is a manifesto of sorts but there has to be some follow-up action as well.

Her place is not in politics so much as in social work. In the next few years, she should strive to emerge as one of the new path-breakers.

FEUDAL SOCIETY

Pakistan is not only a patriarchial society as much as India is, it is also a feudal society. That is what explains the title, and that is what explains so much of her husband's conduct. She is aware of these dimensions. The book is extraordinarily rich in social insights. In contrasting the Sindhi politician Jatoi with her husband, she says:

> "I have seen the ambiance both at Jatoi House and at Khar House, and have always been struck by the difference. I can only conclude that the difference is due to historical reasons. The Khars as we have seen, are tribal people with feudal aspirations. They are still making a trasnsition in an area that has begun to make inroads into the feudal ethos. The

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..... A WOUNDED SOUL

response of the Khars is that of an upstart feudal. They have not been able to cultivate any of the culture and respectability that their forebearers now take for granted. Their pretensions on this score stand out like a bloody thumb print."

Several reviewers have voiced their suspicion that the book is ghost-written. Whether this is so or not would be known only to the author. But the ring of authenticity in the book prompts one to believe that the book is written by the author herself. She might have received help here and there, but the immediacy of writing, and the kind of sociological and psychological insights, of which only a couple of examples have been given, go to suggest that the book comes from her heart. Even if for the sake of argument, somebody else wrote the text, one cannot but salute a woman who went through hell for a decade and a half, and eventually came through as a deeply scarred but still a well-integrated person.

The book also says a good deal about the political life in Pakistan and offers insights of a kind which should be of interest to people in India. In fact, one thing that struck me rather forcibly while reading this book was that hardly any Indian politician has written about his political life. Even if a few attempts have been made, those have been far from honest or candid. And there is not even one account by an Indian wife of some of the shady goings-on of their husbands. The level of violence may not be as high, but the level of intrigue and deception and much worse is not all that low.

It is a book which should be studied closely by women activists, both as a tale of caution and as a magnificent account of how a woman eventually walked out on what she describes as an 'uncorrectable' husband. While women would no doubt read this book with great fascination and real concern, men should also read it. The picture it depicts is so abhorrent that they should learn from it as much as women would.

Dr. Amrik Singh is the founder editor of this journal.

(Continued from page 28)

PRELUDE & LEGACIES .....

state; emphasis being laid especially on the 'Islamic' ideology which supposedly inspired it, the authoritarian model of Jinnah's leadership and the elitist composition and organisational weaknesses of the League. In this context, illuminating comments were also offered on the problems which Pakistan inherited, the absence of a middle class, and the negative role of the Army-Bureaucracy- Landlord alliance.

Interesting observations were also made regarding the implications which partition entailed for the foreign policy pursued by Pakistan as manifested in the defence, security and psychological aspects of Indo-Pak relations.

Unfortunately, however, the subject of legacies did not receive the attention which it merited, owing to paucity of time. Consequently, the manner in which the partition affected India went virtually unarticulated, and even the predicament of those Muslims who chose to stay in India remained almost unexplored.

Despite certain limitations, overall, the seminar on *Prelude and Legacies of Partition* was a worthwhile effort. It contained all the ingredients which make discussions on the partition theme such an irresistible mixof remorseful regret about 'what could have been', involved argumentation, impassioned debate, and an overwhelming sense of nostalgia. Certainly, for some of us, it was a moving and rewarding experience to have been a part of this thought-provoking seminar.

Shri Rajan Mahan is Research Associate in the South Asia Studies Centre, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur

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MILITARY CHRONICLES

Gautam Sharma : VALOUR AND SACRIFICE: Famous Regiments of The Indian Army
Allied Publishers, New Delhi, (1990)

Reviewed by A. Maverick

The creation of the Indian Army has been one of the most unique and successful experiments in national integration, though it was attributed by some to their strong administration and continued presence in India. While nationalistic forces started gathering monentum, it was forecast that" without the British officer and the British soldier, the martial races of the north would once more eat up the people of the south and that there would be complete anarchy and chaos in the subcontinent."

A lie has been given to these forecasts of doom in ample measure, during the last four decades after independence; and men from Kashmir to Kerala and Gujarat to Nagaland have fought shoulder to shoulder in repelling aggression, at least four times (1947-48, 1962, 1965 and 1971). They have carried their trail of glory on United Nations 'peace missions' to far-off Congo, Gaza and Korea, and helped their brethren whenever natural calamities struck the motherland.

An attempt has been made in this book to consolidate the stories of valour and sacrifice of these men. Among the infantry regiments included are Punjab, Madras, Grenadiers, Rajput, Jat, Sikh, Dogra and Kumaon Regiments; and Garhwal and Rajputana Rifles.

A REGIMENT IS NOT A NAME

What is a regiment? Just a name? No, it is much more than that. It is an institution. Young men have travelled hundreds of miles to join the regiment of their choice.Why is it they are drawn to one particular regiment? One factor may be that of kinship – grandfather, father, brother or even a distant relative serving in it, not necessarily as an officer but even as an ordinary soldier. Another factor may be the attraction of famous names like Wellesley – Ist Rajputana Rifles; Napier – 5th Rajputana Rifles; Outram – 4th Raj Rif; Cooke – Ist Punjab Regiment; Kirkpatrik – 3rd Rajput Regiment; Dafle – 2nd Rajput Regiment; Cariappa – 17 Rajput Regiment and Thimayya -4th Kumaon Regiment to mention only a few in the galaxy.

A FLAG WITH RIBBONS

It is said that the flag of the Ist Rajput Regiment which had been riddled with bullets was found unfit for carrying on parades. It was.therefore, ordered to be destroyed and replaced by a new one. But how could men who had shed their blood under its shade allow this to happen? Small ribbons were then torn off for preservation in memory of that day,and when the same regiment went into assault twenty years later, these shreds were tied to the corners of the new flag, followed by a sacred oath that they would lay down their lives and capture the fort, come what may. The impregnable objective was subsequently taken and the ribbons are still preserved in a casket in the officers mess. As a poet would recall :

A moth-eaten rag on a worm – eaten pole
It is not likely to stir a man's soul.
'Tis the deeds that were done', neath this moth – eaten rag
When the pole was a staff and the rag was flag.

Sir Edward Humbley

COLOURS & MEMORIALS

It is normal for regiments to have one Colour,but during the pre-independence period some selected units had two, the additional one being the King's Colour. But there is an instance of one battalion – 4th Guards which carried three colours on parade, a unique distinciton and honour indeed, and the only one of its kind in the Indian Army – two Royal and the third one for exceptional bravery. Mention of this fact alone, even though the King's Colours have since been withdrawn, makes men willingly face sure death for the glory of the regiment. Few have heard of the insignificant hillocks and features named Gurkha Hill, Dogra Hill, Rohtak Tekri, Kila Hari and Nangi Tekri which exist only in regimental annals or in the minds of men, if still alive. There are memorials and gravevards galore all over the country, most of them disintegrating for want of interest and care.

According to the author, "...an apathy regarding military thought and development of new weaponry pervades the higher echelons of the Army. Why else was even the General Staff caught napping when the Chinese invasion took place in 1962 ? The old concepts of picquets and columns for mountain warfare, which suited the ill-equipped frontier tribal operations, were thrown overboard overnight and new pamphlets prescribed and theories adopted in a hurry." Was history repeating itself? Instead of the study of Indian military history, emphasis continues to be laid on wars and campaigns fought in foreign lands 50 or even 100 years ago. Why this persistent colonial attitude towards everything Indian or oriental? Will we ever fight in Palestine, Persia, Greece, Africa Or Europe?

But the malaise does not end there. Despite the valiant pictures of the military regiments the author paints, it is our belief that the Indian Army today exhibits severe behavioural and ethical tendencies which threaten its ability to withstand combat stress. It has begun to develop and adopt a new ethical code rooted in the entrepreneurial model of the modern business corporation. The traditional ethics which buttressed the code of 'duty-honour-country' have begun to weaken and,it is our apprehension, may soon disappear if drastic steps are not initiated to stem the rot. Bluntly stated, these measures may entail wholesale courtmartials of corrupt brigadiers and generals lining their bellies at the expense of middle ranking officers and the simple soldiery of our army.

A. Maverick is the psendonym of a commentator and critic.

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PROFILES OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT IN GUJARAT

Manjula Dave,:URAN ECOLOGY AND LEVELS OF DEVELOPMENT

Rawat Publications, Jaipur(1991), pp. xvi + 211, Rs. 200.

Review by Biswaroop Das

In spite of tall claims qualified by C.D. Deshpande in the Foreword and in the Preface by the author,it is difficult to treat Dave's book on *Urban Ecology and Levels of Development* as a welcome addition to the emerging literature on Indian urbanization and related problems. Starting with the oft-repeated sermon of 'development being a multi-dimensional phenomenon', the work has hardly been able to bring out anything that can be labelled as substantial within the broad scope of the subject. The case examined here is that of the Gujarat State in western India.

WHAT IS URBAN ECOLOGY ?

From the very start,the concept of 'urban ecology' has been reduced to just determining the city-sizes based essentially on the available secondary data,which are often characterised by gaps that tend to render such works to positions of near redundance. The introductory chapter while using phrases like over-urbanization, rapid urbanization, disproportionate tertiary base etc. in almost one single breath,also emphasizes on policy issues and actions for urban development in terms of "diverting the socio-economic and other developmental inputs to smaller and medium-sized towns in order to minimise the imbalances of the concentration of population and its associated developmental aspects *(pp.2)*". Devoid of any attempt of analyzing the limitations of this gospel (repeated time and again in many similar studies) within the contemporary developmental context, the study proceeds on the beaten track of characterizing a settlement system as hierarchical through sets of secondary data. Adoption of approaches like this make such pursuits easy,for one can thus simply leave out the social dynamics that lead to such manifest forms of development caused often by the nature of social relations in production. The resultant thus has become an exercise in determining 'disparities' among types of urban spaces, leading to the mystification of social disparities between various groups and classes of people.

DEMOGRAPHIC INDICATORS/ASPECTS OF DEVELOPMENT

For a large part of the exercise,some demographic indicators have been treated as reflective indicators of development producing rank-size graphs of the emerging urban spatial patterns. Without spelling out the rationale for selecting specific variables,the author has proceeded to first cumulate them together,and then read development differentials within the sets. A long list of various definitions of development has been kept hanging loose without any attempt to sieve out variables that could have been made workable in the context of this work. An over-indulgence in abstracting the term 'development' on the one hand, and on the other,its reduction in a manner which does not suitably correspond with the concepts,emerges as the most profound negative feature of this volume.

From the second chapter onwards,reader's expectations rise with suggestive titles,but fall soon again. For example,the chapter on physical and cultural background of towns in Gujarat,tied barely in six pages,at best reads as sections from a district gazetteer. The third chapter on the demographic aspects of development provide data on concentration of urban population,literacy,work force,housing condition,family size etc. without trying to relate them in any meaningful way. The conclusions thus appear no more than *this is high here and that is low there, or it is not here and it is not there.*

The fourth chapter,while aimed at describing socio-cultural aspects as indicators of infrastructural development, proceeds on the same monotonous rhythm. The prefix to most variables prior to treatment has not been more than naive declarations of their being simply important aspects of development, social development or urban development. Conclusions hence appear in the same jacket with so many urban areas developed, moderately developed, underdeveloped or not developed within various size categories of towns.

Similarly, the next chapter picks on banking offices, credit societies and industrial development (seen in terms of the number of medium and small-scale industrial units) to sum up economic development in the cities of the State.

As a summation of the earlier chapters, the next chapter doesn't deviate from the dominant style adopted in the work and ends up identifying *positive and negative* associations between rank differences and composite scores. The seventh and potentially the most promising chapter that aims at analysing urban development as perceived by the residents, has also been treated in a haphazard manner and is characterised with a pronounced absence of the relevant administered schedule (though explicitly stated about its being enclosed as *appendix-IV* at the end of the volume at two places,*pp.9* and*150*). Given the stylistics of analysis and treatment of variables, the author had no choice but to close the last chapter on Findings and Suggestive Model as a mere three and half page note.

Maps and diagrams in the book are excellent and some of the collated data useful for scholars interested in avoiding scanning of census and allied literature while constructing working hypotheses and propositions for related works.

Prof. Biswaroop Das is Fellow, Centre for Social Studies, Surat- 395 007

BOOKS RECEIVED

SOUTH ASIAN PUBLISHERS PVT. LTD. Netaji Subhash Road, Daryaganj,New Delhi, 110 002

Surendra Nath Kaushik, Rajan Mahan & Ramakant *(eds)* : INDIA AND SOUTH ASIA

SAMKALCEN PRAKASHAN Rajpur Marg, Paharhganj, New Delhi, 110 005

Laxmi Narayan Mahapatra : THE NIGHT WITHOUT MOON *(Poetry)*

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ग्राम विकास में जन सहभागिता

"अपना गांव - अपना काम " योजना

- ग्रामीण क्षेत्रों में परिसम्पत्तियों के निर्माण, रोज़गार के अतिरिक्त अवसर उपलब्ध कराने तथा स्वावलम्बन की भावना को प्रोत्साहित करने की दृष्टि से राज्य सरकार तथा स्थानीय जनता की भागीदारी से जनवरी, 1991 से इस योजना की शुरुआत।

- ग्रामीण विकास की आवश्यकता के अनुरूप स्थानीय स्तर पर कार्य का निर्धारण।

- विकास कार्य के लिए स्थानीय समुदाय द्वारा 30 प्रतिशत धनराशि उपलब्ध कराने पर 70 प्रतिशत राज्य सरकार द्वारा देने का प्रावधान।

- 1991-91 में 20 करोड़ रुपये की लागत के 1500 से अधिक निर्माण कार्य हाथ में लिये गये।

- इस वर्ष पिछले वर्ष के मुक़ाबले दुगनी से अधिक उपलब्धियों का संकल्प और 1.50 करोड़ रुपये का प्रावधान।

"ग्रामीण विकास में जब तक जनता की पूरी भागीदारी नहीं होगी तब तक न तो आत्मनिर्भरता आएगी और न ही धनराशि का पूर्ण सदुपयोग होगा अथवा वाँछित विकास हो पायेगा। विकास सही तौर पर तभी सार्थक हो सकेगा जब जनता और सरकार कन्धे से कन्धा मिलाकर कार्य करें। अपना गांव अपना काम योजना को आरम्भ करने के पीछे यही मुख्य दृष्टिकोण है।"

- भैरोसिंह शेखावत
मुख्यमंत्री, राजस्थान।

सूचना एवं जन सम्पर्क निदेशालय, राजस्थान जयपुर द्वारा प्रसारित।

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THE MARTYR'S NOTEBOOK

[Another instalment from the Notebook of Bhagat Singh indicating what he was reading in the jail.]

[Perhaps some of these extracts also had a deep personal significance for him.—Eds]

Page 28 (25)

Birth Right :

We're the sons of sires that baffled
Crowned and mirtes (o) tyranny;
They defied the field and scaffold
For their birth-rights—so will we !

*(J. Campbell)**

(o) Word not clear

*[Could be the Irish poet, Joseph Campbell (1879-1944) whose lyrics and ballads were based on Irish legends and folklore ! —Eds.]

Glory of the Cause :

Ah ! not for idle hatred, not
For honour, fame, nor self applause
But for the glory of the cause,
You did, what will not be forgot.

*(Arthur Clogh)***

**[Arthur Hugh Clough (1819-61) English poet. A pupil of Thomas Arnold at Rugby, a Fellow of Oriel, Principal of University Hall, London and an examiner In Education Office. —Eds.]

Immortality of Soul :

For you know if you can once get a man believing in immortality, there is nothing more left for you to desire; you can take everything in the world he owns — you can skin him alive if you please — and he will bear it with perfect good humour

*(Upton Sinclair 403 c. g.)****

***[May be an abbreviated reference to 'Cry for Justice" —already quoted. —Eds.]

God's Tyrants ?

A tyrant must put on the appearance of uncommon devotion to religion. Subjects are less apprehensive of illegal treatment from a ruler whom they consider god-fearing and pious. On the other hand, they do less easily move against him, believing that he has the gods on his side

[Source not given; page corner torn out. —Eds]

Page 29 (26)

Soldiers and Thought :

'If my soldiers were to begin to reflect, not one of them would remain in the ranks."

(Frederick the Great)@ 562*

*@[Frederick of Prussia (1712-86) Administrator, military genius and a man of culture, who gave nationhood to Prussia —Eds.]

The Noblest Fallen :

The noblest have fallen. They were buried
obscurely in a deserted place.
No tears fell over them.
Strange hands carried them to the grave.
No cross, no enclosure, and no tomb stone tell
their glorious names.
Grass grows over them, a feeble blade
bending low keeps the secret.
The sole witness were the surging waves,
Which furiously beat against the shore
But even they the mighty waves could
not carry farewell greetings to the
distant home.

(V. N. Figner)$*

*$[Russian revolutionist and martyr (1852-1942) Vera Nikolaevna Figner—"One of the first women to declare war on Tsarism"—E. Yaroslavsky in her obituary note. Her memoirs were published in 7 volumes. —Eds.]

Prison :

"There were no stars, no earth, no time,
No check, no change, no good, no crime,
But silence, and a stirless breath,
Which neither was of Life nor death.

(The Prisoner of Chillon)@@*

*@@[This poem by Lord Byron published in 1816 describes the imprisonment of a patriot Francois de Bonnivard (1496? 1570) in the castle of Chillon on the Lake of Geneva. (Lines 245—258/IV) —Eds.]

[*George Gordon Byron (1788—1824) Sixth baron, a popular and noted English poet who influenced the Romantics a lot. —Eds.]

Page 30 (29)

After Conviction :

During the moments which immediately follow upon his sentence, the mind of the condemned in many respects resembles that of a man on the point of death. Quiet, and as if inspired, he no longer clings to what he is about to leave, but firmly looks in front of him, fully conscious of the fact that what is coming is inevitable.

(V.N. Figner)$*

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THE MARTYR'S NOTEBOOK

The Prisoner :

"It is suffocating under the low, dirty roof;
My strength grows weaker year by year;
They oppress me; this stony floor,
This iron chained table,
This bed-stead, this chair, chained
To the walls, like boards of the grave,
In this eternal, dumb, deep silence
One can only consider oneself a corpse."

*"N.A. Morozov"**

Naked walls, prison thoughts,
How dark and sad you are,
How heavy to lie a prisoner inactive,
And dream of years of freedom.

(*Morozov*)*

*[Identity not clear—Eds.]

(An Urdu Couplet in one line —Eds.)

Tujhe zabaah karne ki khushi, mujhe marne kaa shauq,
Meri bhi marzi whoi hai, 'jo mere sayyaad ki hai'

Tr : You delight in slaughter, I have a fondness for death !

I have the same wish (intent) as my executioner !

Page 31 (28)

"Everything here is so silent, lifeless, pale,
The years pass fruitless, leaving no trace;
The weeks and days drag on heavily,
Bringing only dull boredom in their suite.

(*Morozov*)*

Our thoughts grow dull from long confinement;
There is a feeling of heaviness in our bones;
The minutes seem eternal from torturing pain,
In this cell, four steps wide.

"Entirely for our fellowmen we must live,
Our entire selves for them we must give,
And for their sakes struggle against ill fate !

(*Morozov*)*

Came to Set me Free :

At last men came to set me free;
I asked not why and reck'd not where,
It was at length the same to me,
Fetter'd or fetterless to be;
I learne'd to love despair.
And thus when they appeared at last,
And all my bonds aside were cast,
These heavy walls to me had grown
A hermitage—and all my own.

(*The Prisoner of Chillon*)**

**[by Lord Byron—XIV-Lines 370-378 —Eds.]

Page 32 (29)

"And from on high we have been honoured with a mission !
We passed a severe school, but acquired higher knowledge.
Thanks to exile, prison, and a bitter lot,
We know and value the world of truth and freedom."

(*Prisoner of Schlusselburg*)*

*[Schlusselburg—a town on marshy ground in Leningrad area, where river Neva issues from Lake Ladogo. On an island opposite is a fortress built by the army of Peter the Great in 1702, after its capture. (Schlusselburg was the "key" to Sea, according to Peter the Great). The fortress was later converted into a prison whose inmates included Marshal Dolgoruki, the Tsar Ivan VI, many Delemtbrists (revolutionaries) the anarchist Bakunin, Polish patriot Lukasovislag and Lenin's brother who was hanged there. —Eds]

Death and Suffering of a Child

"A child was born. He committed consciously neither bad nor good actions. He fell ill, suffered much and long, until he died in terrible agony. Why ? Wherefore ? It is the eternal riddle for the philosopher."

Frame of Mind of a Revolutionary

"He who has ever been under the influence of the life of Jesus, who has borne, in the name of an ideal, humiliation, suffering and death; he who has once considered Him as an ideal and his life as the prototype of a disinterested love,—will understand the frame of mind of the revolutionary who has been sentenced and thrown into a living tomb for his work on behalf of popular freedom."

(*Vera N. Figner*)**

**[See note on p. 37 —Eds]

Rights :

Don't ask for rights. Take them. And don't let any one give them to you. A right that is handed to you for nothing has something the matter with it. It's more than likely, it is only a wrong turned inside out.

*[Torn Sheet. Source not given. —Eds.]

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THE MARTYR'S NOTEBOOK

Page 33 (30)

No Enemies ?

You have no enemies, you say ?
Alas ! my friend, the boast is poor;
He who has mingled in the fray
of Duty, that the brave endure,
Must have made foes ! If you have none,
Small is the work that you have done.
You've hit no traitor on the hip,
You've dashed no cup from perjured lip,
You've never turned wrong to right,
You've been a coward in the fight.

*(Charles Mackay. 747)**

*[Perhaps the Scottish writer (1814–1889) and editor of Glasgow *Argus*, who composed several songs set to music. Also edited *'A Thousand and One Gems of English. Poetry* (1887) Eds.—].

Child Labour :

No fledgling feeds the father bird,
No chicken feeds the hen;
No kitten mouses for the cat—
This glory is for men

We are the wisest, strongest Race—
Loud may our praise be sung !
The only animal alive
That lives upon its young !

(Charlotte Perkins Gilman)

[Source illegible, also bottom part of page is torn—Eds.]

Page 34 (31)

No Classes No Compromise !

(George D. Herron)

Under the socialist movement there is coming a time, and the time may be even now at hand, when improved conditions or adjusted wages will no longer be thought to be an answer to the cry of labour; yes when these will be but an insult to the common intelligence. It is not for better wages, improved capitalist conditions or a share of capitalist profits that the socialist movement is in the world; it is here for the abolition of wages and profits, and for the end of capitalism and the private capitalist. *Reformed* political-institutions, boards of arbitration between capital and labour, philanthropies and privileges that are but the capitalists' gifts—none of these can much longer answer the question that is making the temples, thrones and Parliaments of notion the tremble. There can be no peace between the man who is down and the man who builds on his back. There can be no reconciliation between classes; there can only be an end of classes. It is idle to talk of goodwill until there is first justice, and idle to talk of justice until the man who makes the world processes the work of his own hands. The cry of the world's workers can be answered with nothing save the whole product of their work.

(Geergo D. Herrson)

*[Identity not established, as other details are not available. —Eds.]

Page 35 (32)

**WASTES OF CAPITALISM*

Economic estimate about Australia by *Theodore Hertzka (1886)**

Every family = 5—roomed 40 ft. sq. House to last for 50 years.

Workers' workable age : 16–50.

So we have 5,000,000.

Labour of 615,000 workers is sufficient to produce food for 22,000,000 people = 12.3% of labour.

Including labour cost of transport, lunuries need only 315,000 =6.33% workers' labour.

That amounts to this–that 20% of the available labour is enough for supporting the whole of the continent. The rest 80% is exploited and wasted due to capitalist order of society.

*[Source and other details not available. —Eds.

Page 36 (33)

Czarist Regime and the Bolshivist Regime*$

*Brazier Hunt tells that in the first fourteen months of their rule, the Bolsheviks executed 4,500 men, mostly for stealing and speculation.

After the 1905 Revolution, Stolypin, ** minister of Czar, caused the execution of 32,773 men within twelve months.

(P. 390 Brass Check)

*$[Sources and further details not available—Eds.]

**Pyotr Arkadyevich Stolypin (1862–1911) was Chairman of the Council of Ministers aud Minister for the Interior from 1906 to 1911 under the Czar. —Eds.]

$*[In the original notebook, this caption, like many others, has been given in the marginor diagonally in the left hand corner. —Eds.]

[To be Continued]

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Prabhakar Machwe— A Personal Tribute

by *B. H.*

It was a brief news-item in the national daily in English, and even in the local Hindi daily, which put a full-stop to the steady and prolific career of a weilder of pen—*Kalam ka Sipahi*, and also to my on-and-off acquaintance with a pleasing and ever smiling personality and an ever-fresh mind. The one to leave this mortal world was Dr. Prabhakar Mahwe, a polyglot and, as I have said before, a prolific writer, author of more than a hundred books, and lately editor of a Hindi daily from Indore —*Chautha Sansar* (the Fourth World, whatever that means !)

As I read the sad news, on my mind's screen came alive the experience of our first meeting on a train journey from Patna-Allahabad to Nagpur in the late summer of 1948. I was on my transfer to A. I. R., Nagpur as a member of the pioneer team being put together to start the new station. The popular singer Km. Juthika Roy was also in the same compartment (Where had she got on and where was she going ? I am not sure now ! Perhaps Allahabad). The third person was, of course, the tall young Machwe with his smile (Where had he come on the train ? and whether he travelled all the way to Nagaur, I am not sure.) But what I do recall after all these forty and odd years is that it was a pleasant and memorable 'chatty' journey, which has remained fresh and alive in my mind. Such was his charm and exuberance.

I am not also sure whether Machwe had joined A.I.R, Nagpur soon after or later; perhaps later, towards the fag end of my own short stay. (By the New Year of 1949, I had packed up and left for my new assignment in the newly opened Hindi section of the BBC Overseas Services.) Those six months or so at Nagpur were full of so many surprises, delights, petty office jealousies, tensions, and excitements, and also of discoveries (like of Tarun Kumar Bhaduri and Donald Verma) and reunions with K. K. Joshi), Gurtu and S.K. Tripathi as also Prabhat Mukerji). I do not recall much of association with Machwe, except for a vague sort of uncomfortable feeling that being a man of letters, he and his likes (who had 'invaded' A I R. then) were not quite suited to the medium of the spoken word. So, many of us professional though !

As I learnt later, Machwe had worked at Nagpur, Allahabad and in the External Services of A.I.R. before changing gears. Good for him, too ! Because then began his professional career and his vocation as a writer.

Five years later, when I returned from B.B.C., London, and finally moved to New Delhi to work as a freelance broadcaster and journalist, Machwe had already joined the newly established Sahitya Akademi. (why must they spell it so differently ?) He enjoyed the patronage of some high and mighty and, of course, scholarly patrons of Indian culture and its renaissance. We must have met off and on, but there was not much worth mentioning in our formal and 'gentlemanly' get-togethers, except that I do remember having received a copy of his collection of humourous and light writings—*Khargosh ke Seeng* (The Hare has Horns)—1950. Never too close to each other, and both involved in our respective domains of professional and personal lives, we again drifted apart. He became a Delhi-*wallah*; and I a wanderer in desert wastelands !

× × ×

As I was seeing new realities at the ground level in the dust and din of development and the culture of bureaucrats in the higher echelons of administration as a member (a Special Recruit) of the Administrative Services, it was good to read that, by sheer dint of his hard work and merit, Machwe was slowly but steadily climbing up the ladder of success In 1975, on attaining the retirement age, he quit office as Secretary of the Sahitya Akademi, where he had served for more than 20 years, the last 5 years in the envious position of Secretary. But not born or trained as a bureaucrat or a barren administrator, his activities were not confined to the four walls of Sahitya Akademi. He would have chaffed and struggled if it had been so.

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TWO CONTEMPORARY REFORM MOVEMENTS

Mathew Zachariah
REVOLUTION THROUGH REFORM:A Comparison of Sarvodaya and Conscientization
Vistaar Publications, New Delhi, (1988) pp. 147; Rs. 48/-

Review by Harsh Sethi

With not just revolutions, but even the language of revolution, having suffered setbacks in the preceding decade, it is not surprising that those preoccupied with constructing a good society and a good life for all, will once again turn their attention to an understanding of 'socially significant' attempts at reform. Though one is not sure as to what exactly is being given up in this process : whether it is the shedding of revolutionary objectives *per se*, or merely the 'technology' of directed social change through intervention, the exercise of comparing the experiences, trajectories and presuppositions of *Sarvodaya* (as practised in India) and *Conscientization* (as in Brazil) can lead to some interesting insights. Mathew Zachariah, with his considerable experience in comparative education, is well qualified to take up this challenge.

TWO CONCEPTS : TWO MOVEMENTS

Other than academic interest, there is another reason why this comparative exercise would evoke interest.

Sarvodaya, as a process, a programme and a movement linked primarily to Gandhi and prominent Gandhians such as Vinoba Bhave and Jayprakash Narain was seen as more or less a spent force by the mid-seventies, that is, if we incorporate the *Sampoorna Kranti* efforts of J.P. as part of this stream.

Conscientisation, associated in this country primarily with the name of Paulo Friere, acquired a cultish dimension in the decade following the Emergency.

Since enough groups have attempted to put into practice what they understood of these percepts, it is indeed time to take a hard look at what moved entire generations of committed social activists.

Without quibbling with Zachariah's understanding of revolution and reform, concerned overly in my view with (a) violence and non-violence and (b) a false antonym between gradual/partial and complete overhaul of the system of organising collective existence, let us turn to his characterizations of these two movements as they evolved in their specific locales. It is here that Zachariah's qualities as a teacher are best evident. His run-through the social background which early gave rise to these 'revitalization' movements, their histories, the key spokespersons, their assumptions about core values, their views on religion, education, technology, their favoured instrumentalities, and their notions of a good life are remarkably lucidly stated. Any while scholars may find the discussions and comments on each of them superficial and dissatisfying, for a beginner, they are indeed helpful.

Stating sharply, Zachariah's characterization of *Sarvodaya* as a well-meaning, but somewhat naive and utopian formulation which not just stresses the primacy of change of 'self,' but advocates an interested non-attachment *(aparigraha)*, non-violent resistance to evil, a focus on constructive activity, looking for a change-in-the heart of the powerful elite (moral persuasion) etc. to bring into being a non-statist communitarian existence is unlikely to be strenuously challenged.

Equally pithy is his summarization of Conscientization, more as a philosophically oriented technique of helping break the 'culture of silence' of the majority oppressed, as the initial step towards their collective, organised assertion for reworking power relations rather than as an ideology.

A COMPARISON

In fact, the tabular comparison of the two *(pp. 118-123)* is as neat a presentation as any that I have seen. [*We reproduce an abridged & edited version—Eds.*]

Table 10.1 : **Summary Comparison of Sarvodaya and Conscientization**

Sarvodaya in India	*Conscientization in Brazil*
Gandhi, Bhave, and others developed their ethical notions in praxis.	Camara, Freire, and others developed their ethical notions in praxis.
Peak Period of Revitalization Movement	
Circa 1950 to early 1963s	Circa 1960 to 1965
Characterization of Crisis in Culture (as seen in evidence of increased individual stress, cultural distortion)	
Problems of caste society accentuated by colonialism Inherent goodness of all human beings defeated by ignorance and warped social institutions.	Closed society created by colonialism; Oppression of vast poor, powerless majority by wealthy powerful minority has created dehumanized beings.

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(*Contd. P. 2 Col. 2*)

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Mazeway (People's Images of Nature, Culture, Personality, etc.) Reformulation: Elements

Individuals must pursue truth (*satyagraha*) and non-attachment.	Individuals must discover and assert their uniqueness as human beings.
People must learn to govern themselves in society; the ideal form of government is that which governs the least. Hence, they must be in units of no more than 1,000 to 2,000 people.	It is impractical to do away with the state. The state's functions must be decentralized as much as possible; it must be responsive to the people. There is no inherent virtue in village-size government.
While we must learn from other cultures, slavish imitation of other cultures is reprehensible.	As in *Sarvodaya*
Courageous, active non-violent resistance to evil is far superior to violent resistance to bring about desirable social change. The acceptance of self-suffering in the face of evil can lead to a change of heart in those who act unjustly.	While non-violent resistance to oppression is preferable to violence, a prior declaration that violence will never he used means that the oppressors will not take the demands of the oppressed seriously. There is no particular merit in self-imposed suffering, except as part of a multifaceted strategy.
A society in which there is widesperad poverty, disease, lack of access for a majority to education, decent housing, adequate clothing, and the arts is a structurally violent society.	As in *Sarvodaya*
Truth is immutable absolute, In the early stages of one's life, one needs material possessions and relationships to people to pursue truth. But one must develop a sense of detachment to the material world so that one can seek communion with Absolute Truth which is God.	Empirical truth is relative. There is no permanent objective reality, since reality is shaped by the person's interaction with the material (non-human) and human world. So, permanent critical consciousness is possible, necessary.
There will always be wealthy and poor people in society. Society can benefit from permitting people to acquire wealth within limits The wealthy must consider their wealth as a trust they hold for everyone. Such an attitude, fortified by everyone doing their own "bread labor", can virtually eliminate unjust behavior.	Great disparities in possession of, access to, wealth is *prima facie* evidence of injustice and oppression. It is foolhardy to think that the oppressors will, by exhortation, treat themselves as trustees of their wealth. The concept of "bread labor" is impractical.
Large scale industrialization and consequent urbanization dehumanize people. We must encourage the development of only such technology that will make people feel, think, and act for the benefit of others. Retention of the human scale is imperative in economic and technological development. The fundamental criterion for technological development must be : will it increase the well-being of all ? The profit motive must not be the driving force of industrial and technological development.	While, ideally, one cannot disagree with *Sarvodaya's* fundamental criterion, technological development cannot be consciously controlled by human beings. Such development is the consequence of dialectical interaction between persons, nature and society. Whether a technique or an invention will be beneficial cannot be foreseen in many instances. Greater democratic participation and planning can help reduce or control some of the harmful consequences of industrialization and technological advancement. The profit motive must be kept in check.
Education must not be "spoon-feeding of the masses".	Education must not be "banking".
Knowledge must serve desirable spiritual and social goals.	As in *Sarvodaya*, because knowledge is not neutral.
People must be involved in action programs to improve village sanitation, raise food production, promote co-operative movements, reduce illiteracy, etc. so that people can get the satisfaction of personal involvement in social change. Such activities will also increase their sense of capacity.	Heightening the consciousness of people about existing unjust social structures is far more important than promoting small-scale improvements. Small-scale improvements may postpone "the day of reckoning" for the oppressors.
We must emphasize changing the hearts and minds of people and create opportunities for them to engage in actions that will help them practice a new way of life, a better society.	Any attempt to change people's attitudes and personal behaviours without a simultaneous attempt to confront individuals and elites who oppress people is romantic naivete.
Those who would promote constructive social change (i.e., leaders of the movement) must lead an exemplary	It is far more important to take strategic and tactical decisions which would advance the cause of the oppre-

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Sarvodaya in India **TWO REFORM MOVEMENTS** *Conscientization in Brazil*

life so, that both their words and actions can have a persuasive influence.

The higher the civilization of a society, the lesser will be its preoccupation with the acquisition and enjoyment of material goods. Its focus must be on social harmony and on provision for the spiritual development of persons. People will learn to govern themselves well, only if they learn to govern themselves, even badly, in the first instance. Therefore, the creation of autonomous village republics must begin immediately.

ssed than to be caught up in personal regimes of self-purification.

A society can focus on social harmony and spiritual development only if the economy is affluent enough to take care of the ordinary needs of its members. Thus, material development must receive primacy in an economically poor society. Premature decisions to decentralize power will merely enable those in powerful positions to become even more entrenched. The particular form of government cannot be pre-determined. It will have to be constructed after the seizure of power, by trial and error.

Communication and Organization

Through *padayatra* (mission of walking) of Vinoba Bhave and his requests for gifts of land, money, labour, intellect, etc. Speeches at meetings, publications of *Sarva Seva Sangh.*

Through literacy classes for poor peasants and workers. Speeches at meetings, particularly through church auspices; publications.

Adaptation

Bhave decided to present his views in a much more revolutionary socialistic vein. Yet, in its contacts with the general public, the collective leadership chose to emphasize "trusteeship" instead of massive, non-violent, confrontation.

With the overthrow of the elected government in 1964, the movement withdrew into the church and became transformed as "base communities".

Cultural Transformation

It is not possible to claim that *Sarvodaya* has visibly transformed Indian society.

As in India, so in Brazil.

Routinization

The crisis continues.

The crisis continues.

SARVODAYA VISION *VS.* MATERIAL PROGRESS

What also comes out sharply is not just their differences in the favoured mode of organising praxis (*viz.* Conscientization does not rule out the use of violence) but that as a philosophy, it is clearly rooted in the modernist West: the emphasis on material progress through technological 'mastery' over nature, a clear acceptance of the modern state as a fact of current life, a shying away from transcendental concerns etc. Quite clearly, therefore, *Sarvodaya* as a philosophy has a more teleological vision; it knows what it wants. Conscientization primarily seeks to correct the distortions created by specific state–society forms within a broad Marxist vision.

Zachariah is also correct in stressing the differences in the two—emerging from a *Hindu–Advaita* view of life and the universe and *Christian* theology. It is thus not surprising that as a political movement, Conscientization acquired its deepest roots in an overwhelming Roman Catholic country where the Church has, over the last four centuries, played a dominant role in shaping state and its society.

Finally, one is also not too surprised with Zachariah's ending comments that while neither revitalization movement has visibly transformed their respective societies, they remain "even in their apparent failure, optimistic testaments. They beckon us to struggle for the improvement of human beings and of human institutions".

SOME NAGGING DOUBTS

At the end, the lucidity of the presentation notwithstanding, Zachariah's exercise leaves the reader with many nagging doubts. For instance, though the radical political content of *Sarvodaya* is clearly much less than that of *Conscientization,* why is it that, while the key figure of the latter, Paulo Friere, now even refuses to use the term, the ideals of *Sarvodaya* still manage to enthuse a significant proportion of social activists ?

Is it per chance that conscientization has declined precisely because of its 'political promise', which once 'unsuccessful' can only be discarded, while *Sarvodaya,* with its forays into the realm of the transcendental, retains for itself a timeless dimension ? After all, so many of us, once buffeted by our own expectations of political change, turn inwards, to ourselves and to manageable small communities. Is it that to side-step our own critique of political status–quoism, we take recourse to appealing to deeper truths ? But then, these are questions that do not inform Zachariah's exercise. They require a different attempt

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Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay

INNER RECESSES OUTER SPACES : **Memoirs**

Navrang, New Delhi (1986), pp. 410 Rs. 195/-.

RECOLLECTIONS OF

A Tribute by Rajan Mahan

She was exceptional in every sense of the term. A unique specimen of a swiftly vanishing tribe, a distinguished member of a rapidly disappearing generation for whom it was usual to be sincere, common to be committed and routine to be daring, dedicated and dignified.

A patriot extraordinaire, a disciplined *satyagrahi*, an uncompromising crusader of women's rights, a patron of performing arts, an untiring champion of handicrafts and artisans, and in general, a doyen of Indian culture, her life had a phenomenally kaleidoscopic quality. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay was indeed a personage *non-pareil* in the history of twentieth century resurgent India. It is fortunate that before she passed away in October 1988, she had penned an invaluable legacy for us in the form of her resplendent reminiscences, *Inner Recesses Outer Spaces : Memoirs*, which provide many a sensitive insight into her life and times.

EARLY LIFE & INFLUENCES

The hallmarks of Kamaladevi's personality—natural beauty and grace, simplicity and humility—appear to have been acquired during her formative years spent in the idyllic hills and valleys of Dakshina Kannada, where she spent innumerable hours of intimate communion with mother nature. The invigorating nourishment received from her natural surroundings was further strengthened and honed by the refined sensibilities which Kamaladevi imperceptibly imbibed from the creative stimulus and inspiring atmosphere which prevailed in her home. This paradisal existence, however, was abruptly shattered by the passing away of her father who had died intestate, whereby much of the father's property was inherited by an aloof, uncaring step-brother (the lone *male* heir) while Kamaladevi's mother was reduced to relative penury. The adversity taught Kamaladevi an invaluable lesson, which she was never to forget : that women had no rights, and that it was imperative for them to fight for 'gender' justice, since the question, as Kamaladevi notes, "was not one of possessions but of principle". This personal experience of women's predicament, further intensified by her contact with some truly remarkable women such as Pandita Ramabai, Ramabai Ranade, Annie Besant and Margaret Cousins at an impressionable age, ensured that the quest for equality among all human beings became a reigning passion of her life-journey.

INTO THE MAELSTROM

After a fruitful stay in London, studying social work, Kamaladevi returned to her country; and shortly thereafter, was inextricably sucked into the political maelstrom. As with the majority of her contemporaries, she was initiated into the nationalist struggle by Gandhi's stirring call to *Satyagraha*. Beginning as a humble *Sewa Dal* volunteer, Kamaladevi entered into a unique relationship with Gandhi, which inspired her to plunge wholeheartedly into the fight for freedom. Not surprisingly, Kamaladevi provides a sensitive portrayal of life at Sevagram and an insight into the Ba-Bapu relationship : "It was a pleasant sight to see them together, an intimacy which is woven like a web, intricate yet simple". Yet, it must be remembered that Kamaladevi was no uncritical devotee of the Mahatma, and she frequently and fearlessly voiced her differences with him. Among her accounts of India's march for freedom from bondage, perhaps the most evocative is her deeply touching description of the Salt Satyagraha in Bombay, wherein she was herself an enthusiastic participant who dared to auction salt even in the court where she was being prosecuted.

WOMEN'S WELFARE & MODERN FEMINISM

Kamaladevi's reminiscences filter through her steadfast commitment to certain chosen causes. Thus, women's welfare was a life-long mission and her pioneering efforts at enhancing the status of Indian women have now become legion. The narrative reveals Kamaladevi's exertions to educate women and instil confidence and self-reliance in them by highlighting the activities and programmes of the All India Women's Conference and the Indian Social Reforms Conference.

As such, Kamaladevi's cynical references to modern 'feminism' and her portrayal of present-day 'feminists' as 'man-haters' who, however, "regretted being born as women because of several natural functions that went with it", is somewhat perplexing and paradoxical. While her contention — that feminists have isolated themselves from the mainstream of society —may be somewhat valid, and also contain a grain of truth, her summary dismissal of the contemporary women's movement is not only uncharacteristically severe, but also rather unfair, for it should require no highlighting (at least not to someone like Kamaladevi) that, despite limitations in their approach and strategy, even present-day activists are contributing in their own way to the establishment of a more equitable social order. If their tactics have become more assertive, even aggressive, than earlier, it is because times have changed—and how !

OTHER CAUSES & COMMITMENTS

Resuscitation of handicrafs, promotion of music and theatre forms, and strengthening of the cooperative movement were other integral aspects of Kamaladevi's life mission; and each of these figures prominently in her recollections.

It was while seeking to rehabilitate refugees(whose lives had been torn asunder by the Partition holocaust) that Kamaladevi saw the relevance of the cooperative

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A SENSITIVE SOUL

movement. She established the Indian Co-operative Union, and opened several community centres with eo-operative effort with a view to helping the refugees to help themselves in acquiring self-sufficiency and buiding a more respectable life for themselves.

Earlier in her life, when the performing arts, especially the theatre, were languishing and considerable oduim was attached to artists, Kamaladevi along with her actor husband, Harindra Chattopadhyay, had evolved the refreshing trend of the 'New Theatre.' Even though her partnership with her husband was short-lived, the experiment to regenerate the theatre with a view to, "cleanse and purify it with simplicity and aesthetic beauty" has been movingly described in the memoirs.

Likewise, Kamaladevi's deep love for handicrafts has been expressed vividly in the narrative. Her intrerest in crafts had been kindled during childhood, while watching her aunts creating exquisite handicraft decorations out of ordinary materials like leaves, flowers, cloth, paper etc. In her later life, Kamaladevi was not only instrumental in revitalizing traditional crafts and setting up of the Central Cottage Industries Emporium (which Jawaharlal Nehru described as a 'Modern monument of Delhi like the Qutb of the old era, and a **must** for visitors') but also, as chairman of the All India Handicrafts Board, she sought to revive various crafts, and attempted to make handicrafts an integral aspect of our daily lives.

BEYOND ALL 'ISMS'

Given the broad spectrum of her interests, the vast multiplicity of her relationships with a large number of eminent and famous personalties, and the extraordinary range of her activities and services, Kamaladevi's memoirs cover a very wide canvas indeed. What knits together the entire narrative is her intrinsic humanism which reverberates throughout her recollections. In fact, Kamaladevi was much above any of the 'isms' which she apparently adopted at different stages of her life—Feminism, Nationalism, Socialism—for her life and personality itself embodied the greatest 'ism' of all, Humanism. Even Kamaladevi's political sojourn was essentially inspired by a concern for the human, not narrrowly partisan or rigidly ideological. Not surprisingly, her memoirs are saturated by the sanctity which she attached to the dignity of man and reflect the intensly human motivation which spurred this "colossus of quality."

TOUR DE FORCE : OF OUTER SPACES

Unfortunately, while Kamaladev's *Memoirs* constitutes a virtual *tout de force* about the events, personalities and movements that shaped her life, we hardly get to know anything about her deepest emotions. Although she deals explicitly with all the externals, the issues, problems and causes—the "*Outer Space*"—with which she contended, Kamaladevi' presentation of the "*Inner Recesses*" is patently selective. Thus, anyone hoping to gain an insight into Kamaladevi's personal life, especially her troubled marriage with Harindranath Chattopadhyay is bound to be disappointed, for she retains, fiercely and deliberately, her privacy throughout her reminiscences. While she does reveal her innermost thoughts, the working of her mind, and her narrative uncovers a sensitive soul, Kamaladevi steers scrupulously clear from any indiscreet disclosure of 'matters of the heart.' In its reticence of emotions, Kamaladevi's *Memoirs* is more akin to Nehru's guarded *Autobiography* than to Gandhi's frank and unabashed *Experiments with Truth*.

Apart form this wilful discretion, the lack of a proper choronological sequence and the printer's devils are other obvious lacunae. Since Kamaladevi's rambling account frequently moves backward and forward in time, the reader has to wade through it with considerable care and attention, which is also necessitated by several printing errors and lapses of proof. A glaring instance : the index-entry 'Colly Satyavati', in reality refers to a sentence on page 337 which follows description of a procession during the salt satyagraha and ends as follows—"When the police officer arrived to obstruct it (i.e. the procession), he demanded the name of the leader, *and Satyavati coolly stepped up*, declaring herself as the one." These shortcomings seem to scar an otherwise impeccable production.

A PROUD LEGACY

In final summation, however, one is inclined to assert that Kamaladevi's life constituted an integrated whole wherein the public and the personal were closely intertwined; and her narrative too, skillfully connects her life with her times. One can discern a subtle but steadfast linkag between the private beliefs which she cherished and the public causes that she espoused, and this honest quality shines throughout her reminiscences.

Given the variegated mosaic of her life and the self-effacing modesty of her nature, it is hardly surprising that *Inner Recesses Outer Spaces* not only reflects Kamaladevi's remarkable life and luminiscent personality, but also provides a sensitive portrayal of the national awakening and cultural renaissance which India witnessed during the first half of the twentieth century. As she states on the opening page of her *Memoirs* : 'to narrate a little page from this tome, the social history of our time, illustrated through my life and that of some others who fulfilled its momentous pages." Indeed, she has been eminently successful in reaching this objective. Undoubtedly, Kamaladevi has bequeathed a resonant reverie that is bound to inspire generations of Indians to come. A perusal through *Inner Recesses, Outer Spaces : Memoirs* is a rewarding, and ennobling experience.

Mr. Rajan Mahan is Research Associate in the South Asia Studies Centre, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur. [*We regret the delay in its publication.—Eds.*]

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MUST THEY REMAIN INVISIBLE ?

Andrea Menefee Singh & Anita Kelles-Vitanen (Eds.)
INVISIBLE HANDS : Women in Home-Based Production
Sage Publications, New Delhi (1987)

Review by Ratna M. Sudarshan

This book is the first volume in a series on *Women and the Household in Asia* (Series Editor : Leela Dube). It is the outcome of a *Regional Conference for Asia on Women and the Household* held in New Delhi in 1985.

The book is divided into two parts, the first containing mostly case studies on the natute and context of women's home-based work, and the second containing analyses of intervention strategies directed at improving the condition of home-based workers.

HOME—BASED WORK

While home-based work has generally been a transitional stage in industrial development between household and factory production, in contrast, in India and Asia, and particularly when women workers are involved, there is no sense that this is a transitional phase. It is this that assists in perpetuating the invisibility of such work. Reasons for the persistence of this kind of work lie both in the pattern of industrial development and in the intersection of household with non-household demands.

Of late, there has been an increasing interest in home-based work. There is a growing lobby (supported by the ILO) that seeks formal recognition of such work, so that legislation can be enacted to secure minimum wages and terms of employment, and there are many activist groups hoping to improve women's status by organising them to undertake such work. In this environment, a careful perusal of this book yields many insights.

The first article, by Ela Bhatt, concludes that giving home-based, piece–rate workers, visibility and the protection of the law are the central issues for future work. Usha Jumani, who like Bhatt is closely involved with the Self-Employed Women's Organisation, adds to this, that if piece-rate workers could graduate to being self-employed, the greater control over tools, markets and raw materials would itself provide some empowerment to these women.

WHAT HOME-BASED WOMEN WORKERS CONTRIBUTE

Zarina Bhatty's study of *bidi* workers in Allahabad suggests that these women, mostly Muslim, acquire a higher status in the family, as they begin to make an economic contribution, and it is the recognition of the value of this contribution that keeps them going. (In 25% of the sample households whose total annual income did not exceed Rs 1500/–, women's contribution to household income lay between 77% and 95%).

Rukmini Rao and Sahba Husain explore the situation in the garment export industry in Delhi. Their finding is that in 46% of families, women's income was between 11—25% and in another 23% between 26–50%. In absolute terms, an average monthly income of Rs 577/- would be reduced to Rs. 423/- without the woman's contribution.

Women might feel relieved that home-based work eases the conflicts between their roles of mother and wife. But, "New problems appear : work under hight tension, further isolation due to lack of time and continuing subordination, and lack of recognition of their contribution to the family."

CONTRACT WORK *VS* COOPERATIVE

Isa Baud's article offers a wider perspective, since it brings together analyses of the textile, beedi, food-processing and garment industries. Industrial sub-contracting in each case is seen to be a common response of factory units to the unionisation of factory workers. Whether co-operatives run by women can act as a counter-point within this system is a question left open at the end of this piece.

IN LIVESTOCK & DAIRYING

Women's role in livestock rearing is well recognized, but Fazila Banu Lily's article on the role of rural Bangladeshi women in this activity draws attention to the practice of "shared" livestock, which emphasizes the income generating as well as social security aspect of the activity. The policy recommendations that follow seek to protect and maintain the health and ownership status of cattle.

A study of dairy co-operatives in Andhra Pradesh by Manoshi Mitra, however, shows that these do not generate significant benefits for women, either as income or additional nutrition:-An estimated 24% of households sold their entire output of milk. In households consuming milk, there is a large gap between male and female access to milk. The article concludes that there is need to find ways and means of organising women's co-operatives.

GENDER DIVISIONS IN CRAFTS

In contrast to the policy orientation of the other studies, J. Brouwer categorises 'gender divisions' in different South Indian crafts and suggests that these follow 'unconscious Hindu conceptions about the male and the female', making essentially an academic statement of possible interest to structural anthropologists. The inclusion of this article detracts from the coherence of the collection.

ADVANTAGE TO CAPITAL & MARKET CONTROL

The general thrust of the book is an attempt to advance policy analysis. Hammeeda Hossain's careful analysis of the expansion of handicrafts manufacture in Bangladesh shows that, while in the short run, for for women from poor/landless families, this has pro-

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Must They Remain Invisible ? *(Continued)*

vided employment and income (and this should not be under-estimated) in the long run, the advantages lie with those who control capital and manipulate the market ;and "unless structural changes can be introduced to favour the producer, women artisans of Bangladesh may find themselves being priced out of a highly competitive market."

SHOULD WOMEN ORGANISE & HOW ?

One of the best articles in the book is that by Carla Risseeuw, on the organisation of coir workers in Sri Lanka. It addresses questions that many people ask today : Should one intervene to help women organise? What happens when one withdraws — as one has to ? How long will it take before the group can stand on its own ? In describing her own experiences, Risseeuw draws attention to the need for continued support as well as to the dangers of vulnerability from external market forces.

BETWEEN CONTRACTORS & MIDDLEMEN

Jana Everett and Mira Savara in a study of the Differential Rate of Interest Scheme, which is intended benefit the poor, suggest that while a large number of beneficiaries are in fact women, the availability of credit does not alter their dependence on contractors and middlemen. What is needed, according to them, is organisation of women producers at the same time as they gain access to credit.

Helzi Naponen analyzes the activities of the Working Women's Forum. On average, these women contribute between 45 – 50% of the household income. The loan programme of the Forum is seen as a successful way of organising women and reducing their dependence on middlemen.

Taken as a whole, these articles substantiate the point hat women who work at home and who are generally invisible to data collectors, are actually making very significant contributions to the family budgets.

While in their own perception, this kind of work is easier to combine with household responsibilities, it is also the case that the conditions of work as well as the vulnerability to external market forces, makes their earnings far from secure.

In trying to improve the situation of such women, experience suggests that there is need for organisation; that support extended by external agents needs to be sustained, and cannot be a one-shot affair; and that there is, ultimately a close connection between macro and micro issues, and however well women are organised they will still be vulnerable, as part of the labour force, to decisions taken by those who control finance and capital. But there is also an optimism and an ideal that persists, that change and betterment at the micro-level is well worth seeking.

(Mrs.) Ratna M, Sudarshan did her M. Sc. (Eco) from the Cambridge University in 1983. She now works a sa Research Officer with the International Development Research Centre (IDBC) in their New Delhi office.

INTERPRETING BLAKE

K. D. Sethna

BLAKE'S TYGER—A Christological Interpretation
Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry, 1989; Rs. 60.

Review by Prema Nandakumar

There is a story, probably apocryphal, that is told about the great Panini. As he was teaching a group of students, a tiger began moving towards them. Panini went on with his lesson : *vyaajghrati iti vyaagrah :* a *vyaagrah* is one whose sense of smell is acute, Of course, the tiger ate him up. It is said that the sage was in a self-realised state and found the tiger to be a divine manifestation : "Though to our home comes heaven, or upon us springs the tiger, never there be a break in the consciousness of self"

K.D. Sethna's Christological interpretation presents a variation of this Truth, perhaps. Of course, not before Sri Sethna almost quite unravels the mythopoeic symbolism of Blake in all its varied accoutrements. *The Tyger* has always defied critics. In recent years, a significant contribtuion has come from Kathleen Raine who has sought Blake's inspiration in the esoteric traditions of the Cabbalah, alchemy, heremetism and gnosticism.

Sri Sethna brings forward the thesis that Blake's inspiration was Milton's *Paradise Lost*. The Tyger is a symbol of Christ's wrath which is springing forward to rid heaven of rebellious angels. The Tyger is Christ ? A bold thesis indeed, for the poem which is just a series of questions defies definite categorisation. And yet, Sri Sethna gives no quarter for denials. He appears to be right in asserting that "a Miltonized mind like Blake is bound to have been variously impregnated by seed within seed of diversely fused suggestions from *Paradise Lost*"; that "if we take Blake's poem by itself, we have to press his sense out of it, while if we take it in company with Milton, the sense Blake has put into it presses upon us on its own"; and that Christ is central to Blake's mythology of Supernature.

We are rendered breathless as each succeeding paragraph adds a seemingly irremoveable brick to Sri Sethna's critical structure. The mythological references from so many sources tremblingly reflect "the poet's anxiety and self-doubt at the simultaneous contemplation of Christ the Tyger and Christ the Lamb". Indeed, however grudgingly, we have to raise three cheers for the Aurobindonian scholar's magnificently simple conclusion : "Milton gave to his Satan a boundless energy of Desire. Blake held that this energy, rather than the Rationality which Milton considered proper, pertained to the Messiah."

Yama and Hirany-agarbha are both Divine !

Dr. Prema Nandakumar is a well-known writer and critic based at Sri Rangam. [It is gratefully acknowledged that the item has appeared earlier in The Hindu, Madras]

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THREE POEMS by S. Vasuki

"I am an engineer by profession, of the the nuts and bolts kind (mostly nuts) and I work in the field of Communications Satellites. The next time you watch a Wimbledon final, you will remember me. I originate from Bangalore, India, where I spent my school years under the banyan tree cogitating on the exact dimensions of nothingness. I have been living in the United States of America since 1982. Thus, my sojourn has been from one land of Indians to the other (the difference lying in the number of feathers in the cap) Over the last five years, I have been writing poems as a hobby (during TV commercials). My pen(cil) chooses to write about anything my eyes choose to see and my brain chooses to accept. It has been a constant struggle between my pencil and the eraser. It is my only hope that the pencil won at the end My poems have been published in Indian and American poetry magazines (SOUNDS OF POETRY and OPPOSUM HOLLER TEROT in the United Statee, and POETRY TIME, THE QUEST and SKYLARK in India). A poem of mine has also been published in the THIRD EYE, which is an anthology of Indian poetry, compiled and edited by L. N Mahapatra, who has bean a beacon of light in my poetic sojourns. A collection of my poems "ANY QUESTIONS" has also been published in book form by Mr. Mahapatra through his own POETRY TIME PUBLICATIONS, in July 1991. It is through his magazine that I learnt about your publication."

—S. Vasuki, Plainsbora, NJ 08536 (U.S.A.)

MY EXPERIMENTS WITH TRUTH

Smoking Charminar cigarettes in clandestine fashion
Behind rocks covered with graffiti that divulged
Secrets of the same genre, with endearing pals
Who coerced me into stealing rupee bills
That financed this enterprise, from my old man's
Trouser pockets,

I felt very close and dear to
The Father of our Nation, envisaging similar
Heights that I could scale, as I coughed
And puffed, circumscribed by pubescent veterans
Who blew smoke rings in pastoral airs.

Strolling homewards in bold steps with
A stick in my hand akin my historical sibling
On his Dandi march, I stood in front
Of my old man like a seasoned chemistry
Student, ready to perform his experiments
On saline truths.

And my lab teacher caned my infirm legs
And charred my tender palms with the butt
Of a fragrant agarbatti unlike *his* historical
Sibling, for an experiment gone sour.

And ever since, have my historical sibling and I
Grown apart, the paths I tread taking me away
From my Tryst with Truth Absolute,
As I amble from one falsehood
To the next in this farcical world, wearing
A Gandhian cap atop my cerebrum to hide
The next lie.

Oh dear father, thou should not have burnt
My fingers for I would have scaled
The heights of Truth otherwise.

□

MISSING PAGES

Browsing through the Oxford Book
Of Indian History, peregrinating from one
Page to another, from one epoch to
The next, hitch-hiking on white stallions
Through wild grass and on senescent camels
Through arid deserts, I reached the terminus,
A jaded peripatetic, grateful for endured
Battles and circumvented cataclysms.

Where do I fit into this Magnum Opus of Time?
Which page numbers appear next to my name in the index?
How many edifices did I consecrate and how many bear
My stamp of perdition?
Queries aimed at a dosed book rustled many a page
In repose as

A debilitated foot-soldier lying dead under
A cavalier on the battlefields of Panipat,
Raised his hands from page number 151 A toiling
Mason chipping a marble on the aster wing
Of Taj Mahal raised his sweating brows from
Page number 735. A Rajput damsel going up
In flames in a seff-made pyre let out a shriek from
Page number 984....

As entries piled up against my name in
The index, blood and sweat permeated
Though the book edges which were left charred
By venting flames. I tore off the pages
That bore my reference to conceal my
Identity from the mext reader to whom reached
An abridged version (sans Me); continued laceration
By one reader to the next soon resulting in
The two covers staring at each other across vacuum.

□

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HONOURED WITH JNANPITH AWARD

Prof. V.K. Gokak has brought fresh honours to Kannada literature by being selected to receive the Jnanpith Award for his outstanding contributions to Indian literature during 1970-84. He is the fifth Kannada writer to win this honour (which came as an appropriate gift for his birthday).

Born in 1909 at Savanur in Dharwad district of Karnataka, he was initially educated at Savanur and Dharwad. Later, he got his M.A. degree from the prestigious Oxford University in 1936.

Though in his professional career, he was a professor of English, most of his books are written in his native language. At the age of twenty-five, he brought out his first work of Kannada poetry, "*Kalopaska*" and a path-breaking novel "*Ijjodu*", Three years later, in 1937, he came out with "*Payanna*" in simple lyrical style

A POET AT HEART

Being a poet at heart, even ordinary experiences like a sea voyage (to England in 1936) and travelling by air inspired him to write books like—"*Samudra Geethegalu*" (1940) and "*Samudradaacheyenda*" (1938) and (1960). However his "*Trivikramara-Akashag Ange*" (1945) failed to catch attention. "*Pragathi*" (1944) and "*Abhyuday*" (1946) a collection of poems, have been labelled as modern and progressive.

In 1956 he came out with "*Higgu*" and a very scholarly book called "*Navyakavithe*". "*Baaludegula*" and "*Ugama*" written in 1955 were followed by "*Dyavaprithvi*" (1957) which won him the Central Sahitya Akademi Award in 1961. In two volumes—"*Neeraada*" describing the poet's vision of the sky, and "*Ilageetha*", an aerial view of the earth (with the poet flying from Belgaun to Delhi) this work revealed his scientific temperament like that of Wordsworth and a deep knowledge of the *Puraanas*.

"*Kavikavya Mahomathi*" (1956), "*Vishwamaanava Dhrusti*" (1971), "*Soundarya Manamse*" (1973), "*Angle-Sahity Needida Spoorthi*" and "*Aparna Dristi*" (1973) were some other notable works. In 1982 Prof. Gokak's "*Bhartha Sindhu-Rashm*" came out in two volumes. He also wrote plays but they never took him to the apogee.

No doubt the number of his books in English is much less than in Kanaada, but they are all scholarly. Among these are : "*The Poetic Approach to Language*" (1952), "*English in India : Its Present and Future*" (1962), "*India And The World*" (1972), "*Essays in an Anglican Literature*" the edited volume "*The Golden Treasury of Indo-Anglican Poetry*" (1970), "*D.R.Bendre-Poet and Seer*" (1973), "*Shiv Aurobindo : Seer and Poet*" (1973), "*Bhagwan Satya Sai Baba : An Interpretation*".

Prof. V.K. Gokak has also left his mark as an educationist. Starting his teaching career at the Willington College, Sangli, where he became the Principal in 1940, he joined as Professor of English at the Osmania University in 1945. Then there was no looking back; One after another, he became Principal of Rajaram College at Kolahpur and the Karnataka College Dharwar (1952). He was the Director of the Central Institute of English in 1959, from where he went to the Bangalore University as Vice-Chancellor. He then became the Director of the Institute of Advanced Studies in Shimla. Later, he became the head of the Sri Satya Sai Institute of Higher Learning, and for five years from 1983, was also the president of the Central Sahitya Akademi.

Blessed with a vibrant voice, he is also an eloquent speaker in English. **—Sunita Jakhar**

Ms. Sunita Jakhar, M. Phil student, University of Rajasthan and Hon. Editorial Asstt. I. B. C. has put together this infarmation from newspaper reports.

THREE POEMS by S. Vasuki (*Contd.*)

PARADISE

A pebble dropped into lake Placid, devoured
by the spreading waves of silence.
Iridescent flowers in perennial bloom, bestowed
day vision on the night owls.
Lush green meadowes enticed the seventeen year locust
to surface in the eighth and live ten weeks and beyond.
Busy bees danced merrily front of their hives signalling
in all directions, florid foliage for all to fare.
Jungle cats nurtured their pastoral kindred, hare and
the tortoise walked hand in hand, as Darwin ogled
in abashed wonderment.
Doves flapped their wings high up in the azure
sky, heralding peace over the horizons.
Caterpillars donned lustrous cocoons in pride,
amoebas took definite shapes, hyenas laughed in joy,
elephants forgot bad memories, chameleons displayed
steadfast colors, male kangaroos carried their young
in pouches and snakes shed their last skins.

I ran and ran through this morbid wilderness of peace
and elysian bliss, akin a herder crying sheep (!), shoving
docile tigers and cheetahs aside, trampling on red ants
who refused to bite my soles, searching for

Falling rocks and barren pastures;
Hunters shooting bullets at the doves above
Caterpillars perishing in scalding waters,
Amoebas true to their shape (lessness) and
Chameleons true to their colors.
A jungle wherein Darwin ruled the roost
and not the Lord;

Reaching the horizon to be greeted by
a wall of thornless rose bushes that
trapped me inside this hell on earth.

I woke up, sweating profusely from this Poet's
nightmare and ran to the doctor's clinic to complain
of hallucinations, only to find the doors closed
behind loke and key, with a tag that read,

"Gone out of business".

□

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One More Tribute To

Dr. VINAYAK KRISHNA GOKAK

—by Yashoda Bhat

A well-known figure on the national literary scene, Dr. Vinayak Krishna Gokak is an outstanding star on the horizon of Kannada literature. His life and work offer a rare confluence of an outstanding academic career and and as an equally distinguished creative writer. Endowed with an impressive and a majestic personality and a rich voice, he projects what the appraisal in the Jnanpith Award brochure says, "a larger than life image of a great renaissance figure."

A LYRICAL POET—IN THE EPIC MOULD

Vinayak Krishna Gokak is essentially a poet, in his mother tongne, Kannada. His sensibility is lyrical, but also has a solemnity about it.His first collection of poems published in 1934 was entitled *Kalopasak* With his *Samudra Geethegalu* (Songs of the Sea) written on his voyage to England, Dr. Gokak started the expression of the free spirit of poetry. In 1950, with the publication of his *Navya Kavithegalu*, began the era of modernity in Kannada poetry.

But the epic strain in his works is easilly recognizable right from his earlier days. *Dyava Prithvi* won him the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1960, though his urge for modernity was seen even in *Bala Deguldalli* (In the Temple of Life—1953).

However, the culmination of this strain is in his *Bharat Singhu Rashmi* which is his magnum opus in poetry. It took him seven long years (from 1972 to 1978) to complete it. It is the fruit of an intense and arduous *tapascharya*,involving not only high creativity, but also an exhaustive study of the Vedas. An epic in 35,000 lines of blank verse, it is, on one level, the story of Vishwamitra who becomes a *Rishi*, the seer of *Gayatri*. On another level, it is the story of the synthesis of the Aryan and the Dravidian civilizations and emergence of *Bharata-varsha*. With the theme of the destiny of India interwoven with the theme of the ultimate destiny of man, it has acquired a distinguished position in the epic tradition of India.

A MAGNUM OPUS IN FICTION

Dr. Gokak stands for harmony and synthesis, and it is an essential principle in his vision of life. His philosophy of *Samanvaya* or an integral view of life, inspired by the philosophy of Sri Aurobindo, is also revealed in his novel *Samarasve Jeevan*, his magnum opus in fiction.

It is an epic novel of 1200 pages, which took about 22 years for him to complete. The harmony and disharmony of different levels of life—domestic, regional, national, international and global—are brought out through a fictional design involving about 200 characters. The novel is unique in another sense, because the concluding volume of this novel entitled *Narahari, the Prophet of New India*, was written in English and is, therefore, a rare bilingual novel.

LITERARY CRITIC & PLAYWRIGHT

As in his poetry and prose, he has propounded the *Samanvaya* theory even in his literary criticism. Described as the father of modern Kannada literary criticism, he sought to evolve a unique synthesis of Coleridgian, Aurobindonian and Indian poetics.

Yugantar and *Jannayak* are his outstanding plays, which also expound his philosophy.

IN THE SAHITYA AKADEMI & BEYOND

He rendered yeoman service for decades as Vice-President and later, President of the Central Sahitya Akademi. Several new schemes were launched during his regime; and he also wrote extensively on the theme of the unity of Indian Literature.

Apart from his manifold contributions to literature, academic life and academic administration, his life itself has been one of transparent sincerity and dedication. His simplicity and warmth of heart have endeared him to numerous people in several walks of life.

The Jnanpith Award came to him on the completion of his 82nd year, almost to the day. This honour should have come to his some years ago, though he has been fortunate enough to have had a long and fruitful life and receive the honour with his own hands. Indeed, in the world of Indian letters he is a Man of Destiny.

Dr. Mrs. Yashoda Bhat is in the Deptt. of English, Delhi University. Her book on a comparative study of Aldous Huxley and George Orwell has come out recently

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K. V. Venkataramana

TWO SHORT POEMS

PEACE OF MIND

Two things have bestowed on me
The oft-elusive peace of mind :
One is the poetry, oral or written,
And onother, the God who always directs from behind.

Both have kept me engrossed in them
And made my life worthwhile;
Yeah, they have been my true companions
In my life's long journey from mile to mile !

TO A CRITIC

My poetry is not the lines of a flat prose,
But it has the beauty of a sweet, red rose;
Oh ! What a pity that you chose
To decry my poetry as ugly like the crows !

Poet Dr K. V. Venkataramana is A.D.O. in the Syndicate Bank, Zonal Office, Mangalore.

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WHEN PAPER TIGERS BEGIN TO ROAR

Christine Gomez
FIRE BLOSSOMS : A Novel on Women
Published by the Daughters of St. Paul, Bombay. (1990).
Price Rs. 17/-

Review by Lakshmi Kannan

A crass, mammon-worshipping society in which the economic exploitation of vulnerable women is rapidly gaining a spurious legitimacy. The canker of dowry eating into the very system of a sick society. Brides who are burnt in the lust for money; and professional women whose backs are broken in the brutal rigour of heavy domestic work, in addition to their work in office. Women who are sexually harassed at work and humiliated at home. . .exhausted women who are all but dead as they toss about in the fiery deal of life. . .till they turn into Fire Blossoms, lending the title to the novel of the same name.

All of them, elements that perhaps constitute a beaten theme, but that is precisely the challenge that Christine Gomez sets for herself in this novel, and comes through with more than success. In tone, texture and treatment, *Fire Blossoms* is a refreshing change from other works that take up the theme.

FICTIONAL CONTEXT OF REAL-LIFE INCIDENTS

Disgracefully frequent acts of violence within the family can sometimes bring in their wake a numbness, or give one a sense of staleness or over-familiarity. It can be as risky for a writer to pick it up for a theme, as it may be easy for the reader or a critic to find the subject trite.

What makes *Fire Blossoms* a welcome change is the way the author skillfully weaves in real life incidents—that we have read about in the media—into the very loom of her fiction. The case of the Palghat sisters who hung themselves to spare their parents the burden of dowry has an echo of the Kanpur sisters who hung themselves in a suicide pact for a similar reason. The widely-covered incident of a young bride who was doused in whisky and set on fire by her husband—an incident that sent a wave of nausea all over the country—also finds a fictional context in the novel. A voluntary service cell that deals with crimes against women and that really exists in the name of *Saheli*, also functions within the novel. These are some of the facts that lend the novel its moorings in hard reality, without making it a string of case-studies.

Other elements that give substance to the novel are some hard-core facts regarding the Indian police, forensic experts in the country, the hijacking of forensic data and the various conniving forces in the convoluted course of a case of dowry-death. A spirit of utter honesty and conviction that infuses the work wraps around the incidents and helps them move in their forward thrust into a time that flows with the flux of a changing present in its bargain for a more worthy future.

In addition, *Fire Blossoms* reflects a recent phenomenon in India as it catches up with the rest of the advanced/advancing world. It shows women linking up with each other for mutual strength, support and succour, as a heart-warming turn in their collective lives.

What is truly remarkable is the way the novel makes a quiet, sane entry into an area that has invariably tempted some pen-pushers to sensationalize the trauma of private lives or to daub it with purple blotches of colour. In contrast, the novel blows a cool breath of sanity and good sense. No hysterics or histrionics. No populist postures. No loud, extravagant claims either. Only the unmistakable stamp of a keen intelligent, enquiring mind, a restrained maturity balancing points of view with an enviable poise and fair-play. In addition, Gomez has another gift of the gods —humour. With this ammunition, anyone—man or woman—can face a warped, perverse reality. It is a humour that fortifies her characters, holding out a promise of personal health, a mental health.

I. P. C—A LIMP PAPER TIGER FLAT ON ITS BACK

In the novel, as well as outside the bounds of fiction, atrocities after atrocities are perpetuated by what seems to be an unthinking act of violence that borders on foolishness, were it not for the fact that in India, a majority of those who are guilty of murder, assault, cruelty or sadism can still continue to be free from prosecution, thanks to the ineffectiveness of the Indian Penal Code. The IPC is largely ignored and only enforced when interested or affected parties decide to demand justice in a spirit of fight-to-the-finish In the absence of this, the IPC lies limp and flat on its back, a mere paper tiger. They are all there on paper —IPC 406 (relating to crimes under the Dowery Act), —IPC 498A (regarding torture and dowry death), IPC 302 (plain murder) and so on. But, as the author rightly points out through the character of Niranjan, the dedicated lawyer who takes up the cases of women, it needs a political will and tenacity on the part of someone like Bhalla (the victim's father) to push the case through its lawful steps. If he does'nt, no one else is going to do it for him.

ECONOMICALLY WEAK & VULNERABLE WOMEN

Several problems encountered by the women in this novel arise from an economic base. It adds to their vulnerability, which is already there because of gender-specific values, according to which women in India are still deemed to be some kind of a 'sub-culture'. Sumathi, Neerja, Molly, Pramila and their gentle, mature senior Gayatri—all of them work with a bank and regularly meet over their lunch-break in office, when they talk freely about their problems They reach out to one another in times of stress and need. Gradually and steadily, a bond of friendship and

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sisterhood grows and warmly encircles them in a way no blood-tie can ever hope to qualify in imperfect families. And families *are* imperfect. For, many of these working women are exploited both in their natal and marital homes. What is interesting is the way Gomez builds up checks and balances into the strands of their lives, thereby giving us a morphological glimpse of the structured society in India which eludes any simplistic reduction. The class-divide, together with the caste factor and cultural mores, knife into each other in criss-crossing interjections that we recognize only too well in our society.

Sumathi, the most striking girl in the novel, belongs to the matrilinear tradition of Kerala. Even as the only child of a prosperous Nair family, she is only relatively free of problems. Her financial security in no way immunizes her against exploitation, whenever she thinks of getting married. It is the strength of her mind, incisive and remarkably free of romantic delusions, which sees her through life. Sumathi is fiercely independent, and in her impatience with crusty old syndromes about the sanctity of marriage, family prestige and other anachronisms, she is clearly ahead of her colleagues, and ahead of her times. We get it, for instance, in the uneasy calmness of the lines that describe the state of her mind just before she is about to get married. It was to be just another arranged marriage with the usual calculating if discreet enquiries regarding money, property and so on.

> "Sumathi's marriage day approached. But she felt no thrill or excitement at the thought of getting married. Neither was there any fear or apprehension as in Pramila's mind. Sumathi felt a curious sense of detachment towards her own impending marriage, as if it was taking place to someone else whom she was watching from outside."

The still sense of foreboding is soon justified. The marriage never takes place, and it is the extraordinary dynamism and initiative of Sumathi that averts the disaster.

EXPLOITED & NAGGED WAGE-EARNER

Sociological findings during the last two decades have shown an increase in the number of women who are salaried workers with a steady income. Supplementing this information was another hypothetical observation that economic independence has distinctively improved their lot. One would like to believe this. Unfortunately, it is only a wishful deduction, perhaps viable within the speculative confines of a book on women's studies. Life shows its unchanging ways. So does the novel *Fire Blossoms*, faithfully.

The more a woman earns, the more acquisitive and greedy her in-laws turn out to be. Sumathi's young colleague, Molly, in her first pregnancy, slogs throughout the day in the bank, and yet is never spared her share of back-breaking domestic work at home. Morning and evening, we find Molly cooking, cleaning clothes, house-keeping. Her mother-in-law does'nt help, and her husband is not allowed to help. She hands over her entire salary to her mother-in-law, and in return is given only the exact bus-fare each day for commuting to office. Even on the days she is sick and visits the clinic, she is not allowed to go by a three-wheeler, because it is costlier than a bus. Nor is a doctor allowed to visit the sick Molly at home, in view of the visiting fee. Throughout the hours spent at home, Molly has to listen to her mother-in-law nagging her to get luxury items from her parents to keep up with the other Malayalee Joneses who have returned from the Gulf. And yet Molly cannot quite bring herself to hate her ineffective and rather cowardly husband, Jose. Hers is a typical appalling case in 'modern' India.

THE CURSE OF DOWRY

Likewise, Pramila belongs to a lower-middle class milieu and suffers a stagnant fate, because her family cannot afford to give her enough dowry for a 'decent marriage.' We painfully discover that even salaried working women are expected to bring a dowry in a hardened system. We are further astounded to find a family brazenly demanding dowry from a regular bank employee like Pramila for their unemployed son.

In contrast to Pramila, Neerja belongs to an affluent north Indian family with a flourishing business of their own. Like millions of her counterparts in a patriarchal system, she does not inherit the family property which goes to the male heir, her brother. Neerja, therefore, stoutly believes in dowry as her single, if unequal, access to her father's wealth. Sumathi and Neerja take opposite sides about the issue of dowry and have some very interesting arguments in the novel. But they remain good friends despite their differences. It is finally Neerja, the-poor-little-rich-girl who falls a victim to a stage-managed burning Her husband soaks her clothes in whisky and sets fire to her with a cigarette lighter.

The quiet and gentle Gayatri, the senior-most amongst the women, takes a large, conventionally 'approved' dowry to her marital home; but she does not have enough to complain, as her husband and father-in law turn out to be very nice and supportive men, while her mother-in-law believes in hard work, in which the old lady does not exlude herself.

For all these women, the problem of dowry reises its ugly head in both subtle and obvious ways. It is to the credit of Gomez that we finally get a rounded view of the issue, bristling with complexities of various kinds. The arbitrary list of Neerja's dowry has a willing partner in sin in the bride herself—"75 tolas of gold jewellery, a colour TV and VCR, an air-conditioner, a motorbike, a stereo system, a fridge, a silver tea service, a crystal dinner service and fifty-one silk sarees" and, in addition, a grand wedding in a posh hotel to cover seven hundred guests. The list makes a reader dizzy.

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BEGIN TO ROAR

As Neerja recounts all this with a certain familial pride, the reader perhaps notes it with a sinking heart. Neerja takes it in stride as something normal, and does not perceive herself as being 'bartered' or being treated as a commodity. The awesome importance given to the fading institution called marriage, and the self-perceptions of the women renew afresh the confusions regarding dowry although, as educated women, they know of the staturory laws against dowry in the Indian Constitution.

ENTRAPPED & BLACK-MAILED

Sumathi, on the other hand, has a more subtle foe to deal with, for the word 'dowry' is not once mentioned during the transactions for her marriage by her crafty, prospective father-in-law. But she can see right through the trap laid for her. She sees it as nothing short of blackmail,as the latter asks for a huge amount in the name of an emergency need for their factory, and that at a short notice, in the last minute, when Sumati's marriage date is drawing near.

"A planned strategy", fumes an enraged Sumathi: "At least the others were honest enough to spell out their demands at the early stages of the marriage talk. These people pretended to be very noble in not making any dowry demands and now they reveal their true selves, when they think they have a stranglehold on us". We respect Sumathi a lot more for this timely outburst. She accosts her prospective father-in-law and quotes the Prevention of Dowry Act of 1961 and the Anti-Dowry Bill of 1986 as a challenge, to which he gives the sarcastic reply that he is a lawyer and he knows all about it. When he says the "legislation is just a paper tiger", it is the last straw for Sumathi.

This makes her launch out on a campaign against dowry *per se*.She organizes a rally after rounding up a few college teachers, students and bank employees, distributing handbills that briefly state her case. Two days later, she invites the public to participate in a protest march to Prabhakaran's house, with the permission of the police. Over two hundred and fifty men and women participate, silently carrying banners condemning dowry. She also faces the invariable consequence in a conservative country like India—slander. Prabhakaran's family retaliates by distributing handhills that make counter-insinuations against Sumathi's turpitude, hinting at an alleged affair with a colleague in her bank. This, we know, is the ultimate weapon used to frighten innocent women. But Sumathi faces up to the situation bravely, and consoles her shattered father.

Later again, she is hurt by her own friend Neerja's father, Bhalla.

In the process, he reveals his own backwardness: "A woman's place is in her husband's home. Once a girl marries, only her body on the bier leaves her *sasural*", quoting the words in the traditional *vidai*: "We are sending your *doli* today; may only your *arthi* emerge from that house".

Unwittingly, this makes him a willing party to the tragedy that strikes his daughter in her in-laws' house, where they torture her to exhort more money from her father. Neerja is later burnt by her husband.

What is worse is that Neerja is no less backward in her thinking, and would dismiss violence on the part of men (husbands and fathers) as quite normal. Blandly she tells Sumathi that her husband beats her often,but that is nothing to be bothered about, as even her own father used to beat up her mother! When Sumathi suggests that she report the case to CAWC (Crimes Against Women Cell), Neerja is horrified that this may lead to a separation, and what could be more horrible for a young woman who is pregnant?

The novel moves on these deterministic forces which often induce women to seal their fate by their servile attitude. Gomez both creates them and faces them squarely as the stubborn, reactionary elements in our society that need to be weeded out.

FRAGILE BEAUTY OF FIRE BLOSSOMS

Fire Blossoms. And fire women. Not all of them qualify for the metaphor, i e, for the 'fire' part of the blossom. In varying degrees, they have the fragility—some have the beauty too—of flowers. But that is not enough for women in India. Not at all. They need to be tough and fiery like Sumathi, like Molly and Gayatri are, though in lesser ways. Neerja is still quite confused and conforms to what she takes to be 'social traditions', uncritically. Naturally, she is easily consumed by the fire.

Early in the novel we get, in the words of Molly, a standard point of view regarding the central character, Sumathi. Molly asks her colleague, Gayatri: "With her good looks, bank job and ancestral property in Kerala, for which she is the sole heir, how is it that Sumathi is not yet married?"

We can see an almost Jane Austenesque formula at work here: "It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife"—the opening lines of *Pride and Prejudice*.

MANY FACES & CHANGING ROLES OF WOMEN

In the novel, Sumathi flouts the formula in interesting ways. Likewise, Gayatri as a quietly assertive woman, stands out as someone with a clear head on her shoulders. Obliquely through her, certain stereotypical notions regarding stock figures that are caricatures of cruelty are splintered by Gayatri.

We see a fresh reversal of roles here. It is Shoba, the daughter-in-law of Gayatri, who is an unfeeling, crass opportunist, unduly possessive of her husband. She resents the natural bond of affection between him and his mother. And it is Gayatri who is a large person, a very kind and giving person too. Her own mother-in-law, Parvathamma, is again a well-sketched cameo reflecting the masterly restraint of Gomez in dealing with the flaws of her fictional characters.

Pramila, a typical middle-class victim of dowry, is endlessly being 'seen' by prospective grooms and humiliated by refusals. One wonders why she does not opt to remain a single woman instead. Simultane-

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ously though, one also remembers, how faithfully Pramila represents the over-priced institution of marriage amongst the middle-class milieu.

WEAK & MEEK MEN

In contrast to the Fire Blossoms, most of the men in the novel are weak, meek or both. When they are 'good', they can only manage to be 'good' in a furtive, cowardly way, as if decency is an embarrassing quality that can be deemed to be a weakness. They are also quite passive. Or simply vacuous. Like the man who comes to 'see' Sumathi and is at a loss for anything original to say. His emptiness is distilled for us with irrepresible humour :—"He was not looking at her, but was staring at his shoes.

'How do you like our house ?' asked Sumathi as an an opening gambit.

'It's nice', he replied. There was a pause.
'Do you find your job interesting ?'
'It's nice', replied Prabhakaran.
There was another pause.

Perhaps he is shy. . . Anyway, I have made four attempts to start a conversation. Now it is his turn, if he is interested, thought Sumathi.

After a long while, with an obvious effort, Prabhakaran asked her, 'Do you like your job ?'

Sumathi had to use all her will-power to stop an outburst of laughter as shc replied, 'It's nice', and kept a straight face—."

BLOSSOMS WITH WARM RESILIENCE

What makes the women blossoms with a difference ? Their resilience, their positive approach in the teeth of negatives, their survival in an essentially woman-hating culture. The five women in the novel are warm, forgiving, endowed with an amazing, inherent strength to accept half-truths, half-conditions, imperfect deals and lingering uncertainties. And they are above pettiness. They can give a lot even when they receive very little in return.

Each one of them is a very recognizable Indian woman. The young, pregnant Molly begins her day early in the morning while the rest of the family is fast asleep. She has to make the complicated *pittu* for breakfast, wash the clothes, clean up and leave for her work with a bank. Shaking off her sleep and weariness, she scrapes coconut, breaks the rice-flour into lumps, fills up the hollow bamboo pole with alternate layers of rice-flour and coconut scrapings and then, she begins to enjoy making it and forgets all about her fatigue. Her mood alters with the flexible prose of the author :—

"This was the part that she liked best in the making of *pittu* and also the final easing out of the *pittu* from the pole after it was fully steamed. The long cylinder of *pittu* with the three-quarter-inch coconut scraping layers at regular intervals seemed a work of art of which she was proud . . .".

Christine Gomez writes poems regularly. And that shows in her handling of prose which leaps over a changing scene or a mood with ease. Happiness for these women is always short-lived. Prose dissolves into poetry as it takes in this abrupt shift in Molly who suffers a miscarriage. She had all along dreamed of a having a baby girl.—"A lovely baby girl. Smiling. 'So you are the baby to whom I spoke in fantasy all these months. You have your father's smiles.' Baby's laughter crinkles deepened and spread throughout the body, which disintegrated along those lines into a thousand fragments. The pieces were swept up like shattered glass bits and flushed down the toilet. Bits of liquid-raw flesh stuck stubbornly here and there. They must be scraped clean. . . 'Molly Molly'. Someone is calling me from aeons away. I'm coming. I want to come but I cannot . . .".

HUMOUR—FRESH & WRY

A healthy gust of humour fuses the elements of the novel into a whole. It often helps the women face their life. Molly tells Gayatri that she dreams of the day when her husband, Jose, will buy jasmines for her hair.

"Why don't you tell him about this, Molly ?"

"Oh, no ! He would go and ask his mother at once for permission".

At times, the humour can turn wry. Pramila tells Neerja about the rate of dowry for an engineer in her community : "It is Rs. 75,000/- hard cash and fifty sovereigns of gold jewellery. And if he has been abroad, even if it is only for a six days' seminar at the company's expense, he becomes 'foreign-returned',and automatically he becomes costlier by Rs. 20,000".

Sumathi's sense of humour can alternate between a hearty irreverent jibe at the "horrorscopes" that rule and ruin the lives of Indians in unhappy marriages, or it can hit out at a system of marginalising women that percolates down to the level of langugge. Her Hostel Warden asks her : "Actually, being an only child of well-to-do parents, how is it, your father has not succeeded in disposing of you till now ?"

To which she gets a spirited rejoinder : "Disposing of me ? Madam, you make me feel as if I were garbage, to be disposed off as the municipality cart turns up to collect rubbish !"

Humour takes on a dark hue when Sumathi sizes up the raw deal that women get in India.

FROM THE HEART OF AN INTELLIGENT WOMAN

Fire Blossoms recaches you straight from the shoulder, without any of the put-on gimmicks or Westernised trappings that make a few of the Indian-English writings somewhat imitative. There is a certain self-indulgence in their style, as it they are under some compulsion to show us how well they can write English!

Gomez stands out with her cool, uncluttered intelligence that streamlines the novel, even as it focuses on urgent social issues without sensationalizing or playing up the dramatic colours of a woman's life for the benefit of a voyeur.

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BEGIN TO ROAR

She holds back her impressive academic background in English, and her exptensive writings in the area of literary criticism. A specialist in drama, she is the author of a comprehensive study titled *The Alienated Figure in Drama*.

Language flows easily in the novel and there are some stylistic fluctuations, whenever it calls for a regional flavour of a particular language. We get a whiff of Malayalam when Sumathi avoids the third-person 'you' and asks her father with a typical synctactical shift : "Why did **Achan* trouble yourself to come and receive me at the station ? I can reach home safe."

Gomez also writes in Tamil, and this experience in vernacular, one thinks, has a complementary effect on English, making it very adaptable to Indian situations. Her book *Deiva Dharisanam* is a lucid collection of gospel meditations in Tamil, once again in a clear prose that respects the reader's time. (**Achan* : *Father*)

A SMALL UNIVERSE OF FIVE WOMEN

Gayatri, Molly, Sumathi, Neerja and Pramila. The five women in the novel constitute a small universe, a microcosm of Indian women, who resume their work and what they assume to be their 'duties'. They have amazingly strong familial ties, even if these ties turn out to be foul or oppressive. It is a painful revelation when the doctor who attends on the burn-victim Neerja, tells Sumathi : "I have known dying statements being reversed totally, when the certainty of death is confirmed. Indian women are far too loyal to their marital families to let them down, unless they are sure that they are going to die !"

WITH MARRIAGE AS A FIXED GOAL

Within the logic of this universe, marriage figures as a predominant priority, and fiailure to get married might be even misconstrued as a failure in life for almost all of them, except Sumathi. At thirty-two, Sumathi is in no hurry to get married and does not panic at the prospect of not fiinding anyone to her taste to marry. With her, we get a break-through in thinking. When Sumathi finally decides to marry Niranjan, the lawyer who takes up women-related cases, she insists on a significant point of departure for the usual Hindu wedding rites : "I would like a simple marriage in a temple, preferably at Guruvayur," she declares to Niranjan. "And it must be a *Panigrahan* ceremony, or accepting the hand, an alliance of equality between bride and groom. Not a *Kanyadaan* or gifting away the virgin daughter, as charity. Most often people who receive a free gift, do not cherish it."

We know how loaded a word *daan* is. It bears an accretion of centuries of cultural dust that blows into the eyes of the Indian woman. *Daan* is not merely a question of semantics. Between *Kanyadaan* and *panigran* is a world of difference. In attitude. In human potential.

Dr. Lakshmi Kannan, a well-known writer and critic, lives and works in New Delhi.

TOUCH ME NOT ?

Sheo Kumar Lal & Umed Raj Nahar

EXTENT OF UNTOUCHABILITY AND PATTERN OF DISCRIMINATION

Mittal Publications, New Delhi, p. 129; Rs. 125/-

Review by I C. Srivastava

This book based on a field study in Rajasthan sponsored by Ministry of Home Affairs, Govt. of India, is apparently the latest on the subject of untouchability and its wide-ranging impact on our social milieu and economic conditions of the SC community. But the scope of the subject has been restricted by the frame-work provided by the field study conducted in two districts of Rajasthan *viz.* Jodhpur and Sriganganagar.

The book fails to come up to expectations in many aspects. First the demographic data about SC community is based on the 1971 Census, according to which the population of scheduled castes was reported to be 15.8 per cent of the total population of Rajasthan. In fact, the SC population was 17.04 per cent according to 1981 Census. Secondly, the resultant data for S.C. population in the two districts, being also out-dated, are not of much use.

DISCRIMINATION

However, the book gives an insight into the practice of untouchability in relation to use of water, sharing of food, participation in religious festivals and rituals of the community, and discrimination in the areas of education and service Face to face dialogues with the families selected in the sample for study have enabled the authors to draw conclusions on their marital and economic status, and perceptions of changes by the persons interviewed, besides the level of satisfaction resulting from rapid social changes in practice.

The other indicators of untouchability have also been analysed thread-bare, along-with the nature of change in practice and pattern of discrimination arising from untouchability. Urban and rural divide still matters, governmental efforts and legislation notwithstanding Untouchability permeates in religious activities, though S.C. persons worship the same gods and goddesses as the people of upper castes. Participation by upper class people in the festivities organised by SC persons is still a missing link, as in the past. Drinking water and educational facilities leave much to be desired. Perceptible changes are slow and steady.

THE CHANGING PERCEPTIONS

Briefly, though the conclusions drawn by the authors are of little value, based as they are on a limited sample, the study is educative in that it bring out definite and major changes in the perceptions of persons of SC community. These changes are

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A Short Note About AN ILLUSTRATED *ROYAL RAMAYANA*

by **Ram Pande**

The former ruling horse of Jaipur has in its possession a unique manuscript of *Ramayana* in Persian translation. It has some very unique illustrations too. (Kunwar Sangram Singh of Nawalgarh talked to me about this rare manuscript). This is known as *Royal*, because Emperor Akbar got it translated and illustrated under his royal command.

Akbar believed in '*Suleh i-Kul*' (i e. Let there be Peace amongst all). He also started a new religion known as *Din-i-Illahi*, so that people of various religions could live together peacefully. He had a great religious tolerance, and at Fatehpur Sikri, had discourses on various religions, where eminent religious heads participated.

He was keen that various communities should live together as one 'community' in India. He found orthodox muslims very 'fanatic' as far as religion was concerned Though illiterate, he had a very curious and intelligent mind He wanted to know about other religions and Indian epics. He ordered the translation of two Sanskrit works, so that the muslims could know about the Hindu religion and beliefs, through the Persian (Court) language, and this might help the two communities to come closer to each other.

+In the year 1586, the '*Mahabharata*' was translated as '*Razma Namah*'. [This was published in 1883 by Col. Handley in the '*Memorials of Jeypore Exhibition*' Vol. III & IV.]

+In the year 1587, the translation of the '*Ramayana*' was completed with 176 illustrations.

It has the following seals of the Imperial Library Librarians (on the first pages of the folio) :

1. Ahad Bandaiya (servant) Alamgir (Aurangzeb) Badshah Gazi

2. Allah Hussain Murideya (obedient) Badshah Alamgir (Aurangzeb).

3. Mohammad Hasan, servant of Shahjahan.

4. Emperor Shahjahan's seal—15 Razab—1096 (Hijri) i.e. 1658 A.D. (according to the orders).

5. Shahjahan's seal—8 Zilhiji—26 Julus, i.e. 1653 A.D. (by orders).

6. Aurangzeb's seal—16 Shyr—16 Rabi-ul-awwal —3 (Julus) 1561 A.D.

The writing under the seals in Emperor Jahangir's own hand reads as follows :

> "On the 5th of the Azar—Julus I (1605 A.D.) the book was entered in the Kitab Khana (Library) at the Royal orders of His Majesty, the King Emperor, Nuruddin Jahangir, the son of Akbar Badshah Gazi, in the year 1013 Hijri (1605 A.D.). This book Ramayana is one of the famous books of the Hindus. My father ordered that its translation may be rendered into Persian. It contains unique and strange stories which are not believable, particularly in Chapters III & IV."

The following seals of the Librarians are also there :

1, Arif Banda (servant) Shahjahan Badshah—26 Asfand—9 Julus. (It came under the supervision of Mohammad Yusuf, then for certain reasons was transferred to Mohammad).

2. Naktab Khan—Murodey (servant) Jahangir Badshah—1026 Hijri—1617 A.D.

3. Inakhan Bandaia (servant) of Shahjahan—26 Shaban—34 Julus (1658 A.D.).

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TOUCH ME NOT *(Continued)*

observed more in the urban than in rural areas; and respondents with a comfortable economic status perceive more changes as compared to the earlier times. Nature and direction of changes relate to availability and use of water and education facilities. The level of satisfaction measured on a five point-scale highlights the same pattern, with urban SC respondents being more satisfied than their rural counterparts. However, the better-off sections have earned greater satisfaction among the rural as well as urban segments. The over-whelming caste consciousness is focused upon in concrete terms; and the overall picture is as dismal as ever, with a faint silver lining shown by greater awareness among the down-trodden SC persons.

The suggestions given by authors for ameliorating the conditions of the depressed are not only brief but repetitions of the same old chimes and slogans often mouthed by our political masters. It is true that changes in policy need to be backed by policital will, but the simplistic suggestions of creating 'a brain-washing mechanism' given by authors is a non-realisable goal, and a distant dream as ever.

However,one redeeming feature of the book is that a majority of the respondents in the selected villages was found to be aware of the existing legal provisions and protection available to them against untouchability and atrocities. But in this context again, the authors have missed out on an indepth study of cases under 'Protection of Civil Rights Act', registered by the police, which could have revealed the nature and reasons of offences and atrocities committed. Mere data of registered cases does not help the reader at all.

The grammatical (and printing) errors are galore, jarring and almost unbearable. Such errors make the book unreadable and devalue its utility. Nonetheless, this book will be found useful by those who are engaged either in academic research or are entrusted with the onerous and arduous task of planning and executing schemes for raising levels of living of the SC community in the government departments.

Mr. I.C. Srivastava, former Divisional Commissioner, Jaipur, is now Secretary, Education Deptt. Govt. of Rajasthan, Earlier he has also been Secretary, Social Welfare.

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ROYAL RAMAYANA (Contd.)

4. Aga Khan Bandaia (servant) of Shahjahan—28 Jamadul-awwal, 28 Julus (1655 A.D.).

5. Mohammad Ali Shahjahani—This book written in *Nasthalik* (one of the Persian scripts) contains 178 paintings. Some papers have been patched—16 Moharrum—24 Julus (1651 A.D.) This book was handed over.

6. Inayat-ullaha—18 Maha Illahi year 3rd Julus 24 Shyr Rajab. It was transferred from the possession or control of Munam Beg and was handed over to Murad Beg.

The Manuscript was seen at and in : 9 Urdi—43 Julus *(Place not mentioned)*, in 16 Bahinan—39 Julus, at Lahore, in 5 Amardat—43 Julus, at Srinagar, and in 11 Asfandar—49 Julus *(Place not mentioned)*.

These seals and notings go to show that the book was well cared for and cherished as a royal treasure by successive Mughal Princes/Rulers.

Names of nearly 40 artists of Akbar's Court who executed the Illustrations in the *Ramayana* have also been mentioned.

How and when the Royal House of Jaipur acquired this illustrated manuscript of the Imperial Library of the Mughal Emperors ? Since there is no documentary evidence, we can only make a guess.

These illustrated manuscripts bear the seal of Emperor Shah Alam. Shah Alam II (1759-1803 A.D.) was a good friend of Maharaja Sawai Pratap Singh (1779-1803 A.D.) of Jaipur. That the Emperor paid a visit to Jaipur, and at a time when the Mughal Empire was at a decline, is known. These Persian scripts of the important Hindu Epic could have come in the possession of the Jaipur family in or about 1800 A.D.

The Emperor stayed at the Nahargarh Fort as Maharaja's guest and while going back, he may have presented them to his host. Or, the Jaipur ruler might have requested the Emperor to give these to him. Perhaps the Mughal Emperor may have been in need of money, as his financial position had already declined; he may have sold these to the Maharaja.

Whatever may be the reason or manner of transfer from Delhi to Jaipur, the illustrated *Ramayana* is a valuable acquisition and it can be very useful to the scholars of Drawing and Paintings, Religion, Philosophy and History.

A state civil servant, Dr. Ram Pande retains a keen and active interest in the study of Indian and Rajasthan History and edits SHODHAK, a journal of historical research studies

[*This is a slightly revised and edited version of the Note published earlier in the Shodhak (Jaipur) Vol. 19, Pt. A., Sr. No. 55, 1990*]

AN IDEALIST AND A DREAMER OF THE AGE OF GANDHI

K. S. VENKATARAMANI

(This year marks his birth centenary.)

by D. Anjaneyulu

Indian writing in English has by now come of age. It has also come to be accepted as an integral part of the curriculum of English studies, covering Commonwealth Literature as well. But time was when the nature of language to be used in the Indian context engaged the attention of creative writers as well as of critics and academic scholars. And there was no agreement about the acceptability of the kind of language then being used.

In the Foreword to his novel, *Kanthapura*, Raja Rao wrote in 1937, what reads like an exercise in self-analysis :

"One has to convey in a language that is not one's own the spirit that is one's own . . . We are instinctively bilingual, many of us writing in our language and in English. We cannot write like the English. We should not. We cannot write only as Indians. We have grown to look at the large world as part of us. Our method of expression, therefore,has to be a dialect which will some day prove to be as distinctive as the Irish or the American. Time alone will justify it."

Time has since amply justified the experiments in expression, represented by the novels and short stories of Raja Rao himself, as well as many of his contemporaries like Mulk Raj Anand, R.K. Narayan and G. V. Desani (author of *'All about Mr. Hatterr)* who have all come to be accepted as the modern classics of Indian writing in English.

A PATH-FINDER FROM DOWN SOUTH

But there was one writer who had anticipated them all, a decade and a half earlier, making a mark upon the English-reading world at home and abroad. He burst upon the literary scene with the freshness of spring, in a voice that rang true to the Indian spirit. His name, once a household word among educated Indians of an earlier generation, but hardly remembered nowadays, is K.S. Venkataramani.

Venkataramani was born in July 1891. There must be some singnificance (or strange coincidence) that, during the last quarter of the last century, were born some of the greatest men and women of modern India from Sardar Patel and Sarojini Naidu, through Radhakrishnan and Jawaharlal Nehru to Dr. B. R. Ambedkar and Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. The hall of fame includes patriots and freedom-fighters, poets and philosophers, nation-builders all, whose birth centenaries we have been observing during the last few decades and recent years.

(Contd. overleaf)

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Though a spiritual child of the Renaissance and an intellectual product of the *Swadeshi* and the Freedom movements, Venkataramani was not a political participant in the sense that he never took the plunge in the rough and tumble of the freedom struggle. But he was a social activitst, committed to the value-system of Mahatma Gandhi, his economic programme and social philosopy. He was a many-sided personality, who used his tongue and his pen. A creative writer and social critic, he was an original thinker, with the outlook of a philosoper and the sensibility of a poet.

ROOTS IN THE VILLAGE BY THE RIVER

Born in a village, on the banks of the Cauvery, in Tanjavur District (Kaveripatnam or Kaveripoompattinam), Venkataramani was always full of the river and the village and the environs—full of sand-dunes, wind-swept and water-laved. He always lived in a world of his own—simple, natural, beautiful.

Looking back on his early days, he said :

"To the best of my recollection as a little boy, I was always extremely active, hilarious and ecstatic, always roaming in sunshine, cutting new tracks across meadow, shunning the old, The rain-bearing clouds and the monsoon eclipsing the sun thrilled me with maximum joy; and with rainfall, I always ran away from home, to the worry of my parents, to the nearest hill and dale....bunding the flow of rain-water into little pools, cutting new channels and thereby, creating new cascades of rock, clapping hands in all solicitude, unmindful of the drenching in the monsoon rain, till somebody came and took me away....".

In a manner of speaking, he was doing it all his life, in adulthood no less than in childhood, metaphorically, f not literally. For Venkataramani was a dreamer and an idealist who never learnt or cared to compromise with the hard realities of modern life. He was always cutting new channels of social thinking, creating new cascades of literary expression, unmindful of the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune and adversity of circumstance. This time, at the end, the 'somebody' who came to fetch him, was not from home, but the Eternal Reaper with the scythe who gathered him to his ancestors (in 1952).

After early schooling at Mayavaram, Venkataramani proceeded to the city(with which he had an ambivalent relation). There he studied English Language and Literature at Madras Christian College, following it up with a law degree from the Law College.

SKILLED IN WRITTEN WORD & SPEECH

Though he enrolled himself as an Advocate of the High Court and practised off and on, for over a decade or so, his heart was hardly ever in the profession,in the competitive game of snatching briefs, winning cases and fleecing the clients.

AN IDEALIST AND A DREAMER

With the gift of the gab, along with a brain that was quick and subtle, and a lot of drive, Venkataramani had all the assets for a successful career at the Bar. What was even more important, he was apprenticed to C.P. Ramaswami Aiyer, probably the brightest star on the legal firmament at that time. All that was of no avail, as Venkataramani didn't obviously have a mind for it. There was an over-powering urge in him that he had a message for the world, India in particular, which he wanted to put across through the written as well as the spoken word.

With both media, he started early enough. His first speech was an original school boys' protest (in Mayavaram town) against the Partition of Bengal. And his first article was on the "inefficient and filthy administration of the Mayavarama Municipality." All these protests were in 1907-8,when he was in his teens, which made him a local celebrity, full of promise. He followed it up, while at college. In the words of his friend and contemporary, N. Raghunathan (eminent journalist and scholar-critic, as he later came to be), young Venkataramani was already fast going ahead :

"On the strength of one or two slender contributions to old (BM) Malabari's *East and West*, he bearded Sir Valentine Chirol (Foreign Correspondent of *The Times*, London)in Government House to the speechless wonderment of the rest of us, his hostel-mates, who could not muster courage to address our own college professors."

A RICH VARIETY OF WRITINGS

In a period of 15 years, from 1918 to 1933, Venkataramani wrote books, some of which were slender, more in the nature of booklets and pamphlets. They included all types and varieties of writings : Profiles and Sketches; Novels and Short Stories; Musings; Essays and Addresses; Plans and Programmes; Blue-Prints and Manifestoes.

Paper Boats (1921), *A Day with Sambhu* (1921), *Jatadharan and other Stories* (1939) can be roughly put into the same category of profiles and sketches. *On the Sand-dunes* (1923) is a collection of 'musings'. *Murugan the Tiller* (1927) and *Kandan the Patriot* (1932) are the only two novels, more substantial than the others. *Renascent India: The Next Rung* (1928) and *The Indian Village* (1936) are essays on rural India and his ideas of its rejunvenation. *The Nature of Creative Art* (1950) is the reprint of a lecture, a personal exercise in literaray aesthetics. *My Ashram Plan* (1947) is exclusively on rural uplift. *Highways in Astrology* by 'Sambhu' (his pen-name) is an odd one out.

PROFILES & SKETCHES

Paper Boats, a slim collection of profiles and sketches of characters who people his village world, is in some ways, one of his best creations. It is like a tiny

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OF THE AGE OF GANDHI

gallery of exquisite mainiature paintings—elegant, witty, vivid and lyrical,'My Grand-mother', 'The Jagai Guru', 'My Neighbour', The Village Beggar' are some of them.

'My Grandmother' happens to be this writer's favourite She springs to life in all her regal splendour, as a random sample from its sketch would show :

"My grandmother is a benevolent despot. Her rule is universal. She has you in the hollow of her hand. She breaks the youngest colt with subtlety and vigour to the rather old-time traditions of her chariot. You cannot run away from her. She rules you in all matters from sunrise to sunset She holds always in her hands the reins of government, Nothing escapes or wearies her eye She is the patron of orthodoxy and the red rag of the social reformer."

A delightful sketch that the great 'Alpha of the Plough' would not have been ashamed to claim for his own.

One could do no better by way of critical appreciation than endorse the statement of Dr. Annie Besant, in the foreword :

"The booklet makes us live in the village and share in its life. The writer is a complete master of English, simple, dainty, with a sense of humour steeped in the sweetness of affection, running through the living descriptions."

STORIES & HOMILIES

Jatadharan and other Stories is a collection not of stories as such but of sketches in the manner of '*Paper Boats*'. The story content is meagre, as more attention is paid by the author to the character, with the socio-cultural milieu, serving more than as a mere background. As in *Paper Boats*, here too, the motifs are few, but there is an endless ingenuity in the decorative pattern and a frequent indulgence in the lyrical impulse. The author shows once again his fondness for the themes of the early youth, which exercise a perennial, fascination for him That, much of it is rubbed off on the reader should be tribute enough to the alchemy of the writer's art.

A Day with Sambhu is a book of homilies, on how to play and pray, addressed to a school boy. It could be addressed to any one else as well, by way of tips on the first steps in the art of living.

NOVELS OF RURAL REGENERATION

The Indian village had always inspired Venkataramani as the stuff of life, and as the theme of his writing. Idealising it in his ecstasy, he looked upon it as a synthesis of varied elements, as a reconciliation of conflicting cultures, a sociological experiment in harmonious living. He believed in it as the only administrative machinery known to keep down to the minimum man's exploitation of man. His zeal is admirable, but his understanding is simplistic, as we see it now, and even then maybe.

The two novels, *Murugan the Tiller*, and *Kandan the Patriot* are his more substantial contributions to Indian literature both in terms of size and in terms of aim. Though the basic themes, or the main strands of the story are the same in both, viz , rural regeneration and the struggle for political freedom, there is a notable difference in emphasis and in treatment.

Murugan, being the earlier experiment in fictional creation; retains some of the signs of a prentice effort more of ideas and sentiments than of incidents and action. Murugan may not be the real hero of the novel, but the beauty and creativity of village life as against life in the city are well established.

While both the novels are deeply influenced by the ethos of the Gandhian Age, *Murugan* may be treated as a novel of the Gandhian ideas and ideals, and *Kandan* a novel of incident and character, inspired by and based on the Gandhian political movement. It is but natural that both should have dated, and dated so fast.

A PHILOSOPHER WI H A VISION

The author's clarity of rendering and lucidity of exposition could be seen in everything that he wrote, including the pamphlet on Astrology. He believed in it as a science of tendencies. As he so rightly observed, it relies so much more on the personal skill and intuition of the interpreter than on the aid and intricate rules, even as a nautical chart and compass are useful only to the known mariner.

His flair for the apt simile is a vital asset to his poetic style. He also wrote in Tamil, having edited the magazines, *Tamil Ulagu* and *Bharata Mani*.

Revitalisation of Indian society through a reconstruction of the village democracy in practice through decentralisation of the administration, and re-establishment of *Dharma* as the foundation of our culture are the main principles of his philosophy of life. He was orthodox, but not bigoted; traditional but not reactionary or obscurantist.

Venkataramani soared high as a visionary. As an idealist, he was uncompromising. His dreams might have remained unrealised. But his infectious zest and courage of conviction, along with his intensely personal style, lent a compelling character to his writings which deserve the closest attention of the enlightened general reader to day, as well as the academic scholar and specialist.

Author and journalist and our Editorial Associate at Madras, D. Anjaneyulu, a former President of Madras Press Club, is also Associate Editor of TRIVENI Quarterly and a contributing columnist for The Hindu, Madras.

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TALES OF MIDDLE—CLASS LIFE & LOVES

Sudha Palit : THE DIEHARD
Writers' Workshop, Calcutta (1988) Pp. 92 Rs. 40.

Review by Madhu Singh

This is a charming little collection of short stories, most of which have already been published in various women's magazines. Through all the stories, the reader is aware that the author is a woman-writer, perhaps because they were written for that audience, or may be, she has not been able to rise above her own feminity in her work. It is not that the stories all are women-oriented or that the men are not focal points of some of them; but the vein persists.

The collection is very variegated; and therein lies an appeal of the book. Varied glimpses of the panorama of everyday Indian life-situations have been covered : servant problems, drifting families, old age, unemployment, love, deceit, corruption—the rich variety is all there. The themes are well-chosen.

It is only in the description, the execution and the narration that the deft touch of a real genius is lacking. The characters do not come alive; the descriptions of people and places are usually only in passing. If a writer has turn of phrase, this is adequate in a short story, failing which a little elaboration is called for. In most of the stories, the progression of ideas is brought about through conversations, and these are not terse enough.

Another technique frequently used is reporting of a tale by an outsider, as in *Adrift*, *Sabita* and *Atonement*. Her people are like card-board cut-outs loosely joined by one line statements and descriptions and the conversations are repartees of the party kind. However, in *Atonement*, the description of Mrs. Mehta is good, and in *Last Chance*, both people and surroundings are well described. May be, these stories were written later, and the author has developed the art of story-telling !

The Twist

Hands of Fate, *The Home-Coming* and *Escape* are different from the run-of-the-mill. The *Home-Coming* is a good story about greed, manipulation and crookery with an adroit twist at the end. In the *Escape*, another well-handled situation, the writer's background of psychological counselling holds her in good stead. With one deft phrase, "all that had happened three years ago", an aura of mystery is created in the *Day of Party*. But, as in the *Hold-up*, the story lacks the necessary crispness, Over-elaboration, laboured explanations, and a certain predictability mar the impact of these stories. *Hands of Fate* has a good theme, and in the hands of an accomplished story-teller would have been very powerful. Mrs Palit however, lacks the linguistic acumen to build and maintain the tension of these stories. In the *Last Chance*, too, the author proselytzes, thus losing the story about the death of a greedy enterpreneur who was cheated by death in his attempt to atone for his sins by donating his eyes to the hospital.

Angles of Love

Sabita is a love story of a differnt sort, a Pygmation-like touch, for the husband, a quiet intellectual, for the sake of his lonely wife, not only teaches her the art of conversation, but moulds himself into a socialite. Sabita remains a distant character, but the other characters are ably drafted. The pathos of the situation is brought out without becoming maudlin. In *The Questions*, it is the woman who cannot understand why the husband loves her. This is an attempt to highlight the ills of our complex society where 'fair is beautiful', and the ensuing anguish of a dark girl who is chosen after being "shown"—a most de-humanizing custom that prevails.

In the entire collection, the two stories that raise important questions of modern-day Indian living are *Adrift* and the *Diehard*. In *Adrift*, a simplistic treatment has been given to the tale of a suicide. Parents, to-day, are loving and indulgent, tolerating and encouraging every whim of their children. "Father, what shall I do", is the key to the son's character. Modern psychology advises parents to give their children freedom to discover themselves and their talents, but where is the line that demarcates spoiling from neglectful leniency. These questions of child-rearing and guidance are very alive and relevant.

The little story, *Diehard*, is the one in which the greatest amount of care towards developing the characters and atmosphere has been given. Details of the pen-holders, charcoal drawings, the post-card—bring out the village atmosphere. The personal appearance and demeanour of Kishan, the servant, is befitting. Anjali's (the wife) attitudes, observations and feelings are adequately demonstrated; the husband, however, is under-developed as a person. The impact of the story lies in the fact that this is an experience we are all facing with the growing awareness of the poor about their rights. There remains, however, a superficiality in the treatment and a lack of depth in the feeling portrayed by the characters.

Mrs. Palit is well aware of the social milieu she lives in. She writes her stories as an observer, an outsider. With a little development in the art of describing atmoshere and people, she could mature into a writer of great power and grip. Complex human emotions and situations cannot be dealt with in simplistic terms or superficially. The fault perhaps lies in the selection of stories themselves. They have been written over a period of years, and the similarity in technique and alikeness of people does not manifest itself in seperate readings, put together in a collection, it becomes a glaring flaw.

Dr. (Mrs.) Madhu Singh, a former lecturer in Psychology, has now become our Editorial Associate at Dehra Dun. (U.P.)

[We regret the delayed publication. —Eds.]

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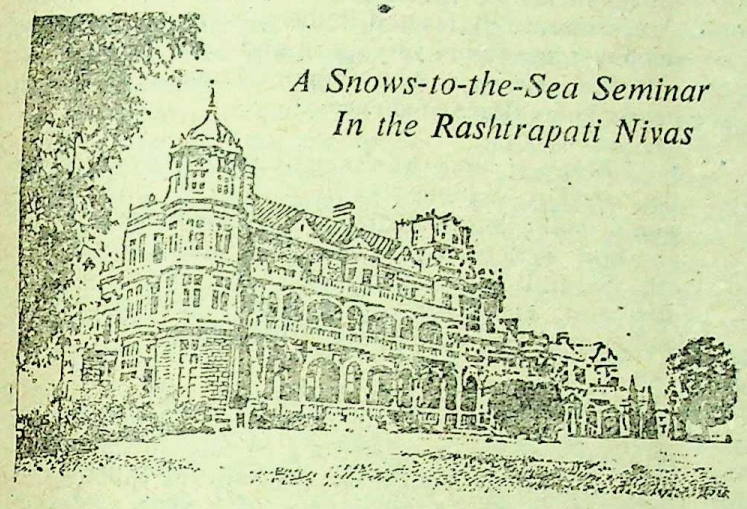
A Seminar on Modern Indian Literature

The mention of *Rashtrapati Nivas* conjures up a vision of police *bandobast*, liveried attendants, high domes, hanging chandeliers, wandering eyes of black cats, the proverbial red carpet and protocol, metal detectors and a political climate. But the place I refer to, though bearing that name, has no Rashtrapati in it. It is an old Viceregal Lodge built in Shimla in 1888, which now houses the Indian Institute of Advanced Study.



A Snows-to-the-Sea Seminar In the Rashtrapati Nivas

At present, it is a quiet campus for scholars from all corners of the country, who pursue subjects of their interest for a specified term granted to them. In other words, it is a modern version of an old *ashram* where *rishis* research (perform their academic *yagna* in the *yagnashala*—(chambers allotted to them) without being disturbed by a *Surpankha* or a band of *Rakshas* or even a Menaka and her celestial nymphs.

The Rashtrapati Nivas is a gift given by the philosopher President of India, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan to the intellectual community of our land to pursue knowledge uninterruptedly. Spread over a vast area of the *Summer Hill*, its campus has a few houses for resident scholars. The main building, which is the hub of all activities, administrative as well as academic, has a rich library with more than one lakh volumes on its shelves.

To this Institute, I was invited to participate in a national seminar on **Social Awareness in Modern Indian Literature** in the first week of July '91.

Report by I. K. Sharma

MULTI-DISCIPLINARY SEMINAR

The multidisciplinary seminar attracted social scientists, economists, philosophers, historians, besides poets, critics, and writers of several languages, from the snows of Himalayas to the sea-shores of India, from Kashmir to Kerala. The prominent ones were :—K. Ayappa Panikar and Ms. B. Chandrika (*Kerala*), K S Rammurti and K. Chellappan (*Temilnadu*), Ram Bapat and Ms. Vijaya Rajadhyaksha (*Maharashtra*), O.P. Juneja, Sudhir Chandra, E.V. Ramakrishnan (*Gujarat*), T.S. Gill, J S. Rahi, M.S Manjit Paul Kaur (*Punjab*), Ms. Rekha and Usha Pathania (*HP*), Partha Chatterjee (*Bengal*), Alok Rai (*UP*), Dharmendra Goel and Ms Rekha Jhanjhi (*Chandigarh*), Joginder Paul, Badri Ratna and Ms. Sukrita Paul Kumar (*Delhi*), and I.K. Sharma (*Rajasthan*). Two Fellows represented their States : A. Ramakrishna Rao (*Andhra Pradesh*), and T.N Dhar (*Kashmir*) and those who represented themselves and the Institute were Jaidev, J.D. Sethi, and Prem Singh. The other Fellows who were religiously present were Profs. R.K. Kaul, D.D. Mahulkar, Nirmal Singh, and A.S. Narang.

On Monday, July 1, at 9 a m., as soon as we assembled in the Seminar Room, Professor J.S Grewal, the Director of the Institute, announced that since no VIP was available in the town to formally inaugurate the seminar, he had chosen to do that job himself. His informal opening remarks at once set the tone for the seminar and created a congenial atmosphere for the intellectual fireworks to follow

RAIN OF WORDS : RICH HARVEST OF IDEAS

For five days, there was a continual rain-shower of words. About two dozen papers ware presented and more then four dozen writers and scholars' x-rayed them. All through this exercise, our central concern was Social Awareness in Modern Indian Literature.

In his paper, Prof. K. Ayappa Panikar pointed out that the 'social' and the 'personal' are mutually complementary and not irreconcilable opposites. Dr. B. Chandrika discussed contemporary reductions of the Puranic Narrative Mode in the novels of three Kerala writers : P. K. Balakrishnan, M. T. Vasudevan Nair, and Shashi Tharoor.

Prof. K S. Ramamurti stressed the fact that the emergence of the Indian English novel was a steady and natural process set in motion by several socio-cultural factors in various parts of this country, and not just an accident.

Prof. Partha Chatterjee looked at the theme of change in the 19th century Bengal and the birth of a 'new woman' on the basis of his study of the autobiographies written by women.

(*Continued*)

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In the Rashtrapati Nivas—A Seminar on Modern Indian Literature

Prof. T. N. Dhar maintained that novel was the most suitable literary form (exploited by Mulk Raj Anand) for commenting on the fast changing scenario of perindependent India.

Drawing illustrations from the works of Tamil writers like Kalki, Pudumaipittan, Annaduri and others, Prof. Chellapan showed how social awareness came into a creative collision with mythical consciousness.

In a joint paper, T. S Gill and Dr. Manjit Paul discussed the plays of Sant Singh Sekhon as a mirror of Sikh history.

Prof Dharmendra Goel shed light on the pioneering role of Prem Chand in the field of writing realistic fiction in Hindi.

Prof A Ramakrihna Rao traced several trends in Telugu poetry and brought to our notice the extreme posture adopted by the followers of *digambarkavativa*, a literary aberration.

Prof. Ram Bapat and Vijaya Rajadhyaksha (in their seperate papers) emphasised the role of *Dalit Kavita* in shaping the modern literature written in Maharashtra, whether in English or in Marathi

Dr. Alok Rai drew attention to the alternative black masks, hooded as well as eivilizational, in present days of post-modern tolerance.

Dr. Jaidev brought to light 'pigs and men' among the intellectuals in contemporary Hindi fiction, carefully avoiding the seminarians.

Dr. O. P. Juneja traced the development of Indian English novel in the colonial situation in the past and its growth afterwards.

Dr E. V. Ramakrishnan explained the way Kedarnath Singh, in his poetry, redefined the paradigms that interpret man, nature, and society.

Dr Sukrita Paul Kumar based her paper on modern Hindi and Urdu short stories seeking a space between the outer and inner realities

Dr Kumkum Yadav dealt with the theme of Gandhi in the English novels of India.

Dr. Prem Singh made a comparative study of the social outlook in the works of Prem Chand and Agyeya.

Dr. Rekha Jhanjhi gave glimpses of the East and the West in the novels of Raja Rao.

Dr. Usha Pathania explored the base in which Arun Joshi, in his novels, dealt with the theme of the Being.

And the writer of these lines (*IBC reporter*) explained how writers of Rajasthan had consistently opposed both their Rajas and the British from 1857 to 1947.

INTERACTIONS & EXPLORATIONS

Besides these papers, there were talks by Dr. Badri Raina and Prof. Sudhindra Kumar. Prof. J. D. Sethi delivered the Silver Jubilee Lecture.

Each paper raised certain issues related to the broad theme of the seminar. The audience in each case, without fail, reacted sharply. (Only in one case, the paper was found very 'profound' and the chairman and the audience, by common consent, resolved to invoke the culture of silence.)

Many a time, the social scientists would corner the creative writers; occasionally the philosophers would make subtle distinctions between one term and another; sometimes the historians would silence them all. Several fashionable terms like myth, fantasy, east-west encounter, modernism, post-modernism, dichotomy etc. were freely tossed about.

Gandhi and Dr. Ambedkar also frequently appeared on the scene. The issue of English *vis-a-vis* regional languages figured a great deal in the discussion. But all through, it was felt that the Indian writer might draw useful techniques, if he/she so desired, from the modern masters, but his/her work should retain, at all costs, the native flavour. If ever the enthusiasm of the participants waned, they looked to the 'infant terrible'—Badri Raina, who always kept the pot of criticism boiling.

CREATIVE SESSIONS

Each day, creative writers would meet in the lounge of the Observatory House and read out from their works. One day was devoted excusively to short-story and another day to poetry The participants were : K. Ayappa Panikar, Joginder Paul, E. V. Ramakrishnan, Vijaya Rajadhyakshya, Sukrita Paul Kumar, Rekha, Prem Singh, I K. Sharma. Manjit Paul Kaur, K. S. Ramamurti, Badri Raina and others. Each session was conducted in a very informal manner.

On the last day, a session on Creativity was held in the seminar hall, and the views of creative writers on 'how he/she writes' were tape-recorded. Those whose voice was trapped, if I remember correctly, are: K. Ayappa Panikar, K. S. Ramamurti, Joginder Paul, Vijaya Rajadhyaksha, Manjit Paul Kaur, I.K Sharma. Sukrita Paul Kumar. May be one or two more !

A REWARDING EXPERIENCE

For many of us, the seminar was a rewarding experience. It was surprisingly free from inter-factional fights. The litany of free speach that was pra-

(*Continued on next page 22*)

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A SEARCH FOR NEW VALUES

Kishore Gandhi : THE ODYSSEY OF SCIENCE, CULTURE AND CONSCIOUSNESS
Abhinav Publications, New Delhi, (1990) pp. 238 Price Rs. 250

Review by Ram K. Vepa

Some books are indeed difficult to review; the present book is one such. Its very title is confusing; its objective as stated on the jacket is forbidding: "it is hoped" says the write-up," that this volume will generate a meaningful dialogue on the language of quest, the epistemology of creative self, the cure of the malady of modern and the discontent and deviant of civilisation and the truest form of the unfinished evolution when matter shall be the spirit's willing bride" ------ see, what I mean!

The book is a collection of essays by many distinguished and learned people ; the list of contributors includes scholars like Dr. Karan Singh, Dr. Gopal Singh, Lokesh Chandra; politicians like (the late) Rajiv Gandhi and the irrepressible Vasant Sathe; scientists such as Dr. Kothari, Prof. Sudershan and Dr. Raja Ramanna and bureaucrats such as Veera Raghavan and Tarzie Vittachi who has worked in the UN system for many years.

With such a diverse group of writers, it is inevitable that the essays presented in the book lack a coherent focus: some are excellent, many are readable and a few incomprehensible. One wishes that the editor had given an over-view of the various points expressed in the several essays, though perhaps, his own contribution was meant to do so. I shall, in this review, give some of the thoughts expressed by the writers (those who I could understand) without trying to bring them into any logical frame-work.

Rajiv Gandhi, in a short piece, pleads for compassion and a sense of kinship to overcome hatred and violence — that seems to be all around us. (In retrosopect, he himself became a victim of that senseless violence cutting short a life full of promise). Does economic development, he asks, lead to greater happiness? He seeks a more positive thinking to base such a development on ethical foundations.

Karan Singh reverts to a theme he has been talking about frequently — of the increasing globalisation of the world we live in. This envisages a spiritual unity that transcends national boundaries and needs a world-wide network that cuts across races and ideologies.

Vasant Sathe speaks of the convergence of science and spirituality as a striking feature of our time. Mankind has to find a new systhesis of intellect and mind to resolve its problems.

Dr. Gopal Singh defines science and philosophy : according to him, "Science deals with analysis, philosophy with synthesis". This is fine, but one wonders whether he is right when he says further "Science tells us how to heal and kill; Philosophy, how to live and be happy"!--- One wishes it were as simple as that! He then defines culture and consciousness; all cultural achievement, according to him, is the result of human consciousness.

Kishore Gandhi, the editor, speaks of the fundamental unity of the objective view of reality and the subjective view of inner experience. The hope for the future lies in learning 'to match the science of things with science of Self'.

Prof. Kothari defines science as the search for Truth and explores the meaning of Truth in logic, mathematics and ethics. He cites Gandhiji's life as an example of experimentation in ethics. What cannot be described by science, he says, is not necessarily contradictory to it. Reality has not one facet but many, all of which are complementary to each other.

Dr. Raja Ramanna, in a brief essay, explores the '*advaita*' philosophy of Sankara and finds, it is based on logic and not mere scriptural authority— which is the reason why it had so many adherents over a long period— even if the logic was not always understood.

Prof. Sudershan contrasts the path of science and that of tradition and finds a number of bridges between the two; one such is learning, *vidya*, which leads to the joy of discovery, *ananda*. He talks of 'binocular' vision which embraces both the paths leading to penetrating insights and excellence.

Mr. Tarzie Vittachi wants a more vigorous effort by the media, press and the educators to ensure greater compliance of human values and the protection of the environment. There should be greater stress on obligations rather than on rights, which would make all the difference between survival and disaster.

I have tried to pick out some of the main threads in most of the essays. There are many others which are profound, if a little esoteric. A common theme in all the essays is the magnitude of the disaster that is likely to overtake the human race unless it develops a new consciousness (for which there is need) through a convergence of science and culture, of the mind and the spirit. The world, today, has to make a choice between the path of love as preached by Buddha and the path of destruction as symbolised by the atom bomb. The world has, indeed, become a global village, and new models of political and social systems are needed to transform civilisation to a higher plane to ensure its survival.

There is much material for profound thought in this collection of essays, but one wishes that the basic theme of the book had been brought out more clearly and forcefully than has been done.

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WHO CONTROLS THE INDIAN OCEAN?

Rasul B. Rais : THE INDIAN OCEAN AND THE SUPER POWERS
Vistaar Publications NewDelhi, (1987) pp. 215

Review by Satish Kumar

This book was an attempt by a Pakistani scholar, an Assistant Professor in the International Relations Department of Quai-i-Azam University, Islamabad, to provide an analysis of the super-power strategy and interests in the Indian Ocean, as it had evolved over the years.

SUPER POWER COMPETITION— THEORY OF RECIPROCAL ESCALATION

The author questioned the 'reciprocal escalation' theory with regard to super-power competition in the Indian Ocean on two grounds. First, the naval deployment of the two super powers in Indian Ocean was not matching. Empirically, there was a wide gap between the naval facilities and force structures of the two powers, which could be explained by the asymmetries of their interests. Secondly, the naval presence of each super power was not intended to pose a threat to the economic and security interests of the other. Rather, the naval capabilities, force structures, and facilities were meant to safeguard the significant economic, political and strategic stakes which both powers have developed in the Indian Ocean.

What are/were those stakes? The author has examined them in terms of political, economic, and strategic or security interests of the two powers.

AMERICAN OBJECTIVES & INTERESTS

America's political objectives are/were two-fold. The first relates to limiting Soviet influence, or undermining it wherever possible. The Soviet Union tried to expand its influence in the Indian Ocean as a part of its Third World diplomacy. The second political objective pertains to maintaining stability, which is an euphemism for *status quo*. In other words, the United States seeks to protect the friendly regimes, irrespective of whether they are authoritarian or democratic. The US security interests, according to the author, also consist in safeguarding the pro-West regimes against Soviet pressures, and ensuring security against a variety of regional threats ranging from domestic turmoil in a friendly country to intra-regional conflicts which might threaten the security of friendly states.

The vital economic interests of the United States in the Indian Ocean consist in ensuring unhindered flow of oil from the Middle East, not so much for its own needs as for that of its allies. The second objective lies in protecting massive capital investments of the US multinational corporations in the Gulf region. The third objective consists in maintaining large scale transfer of conventional arms from America to the Indian Ocean region.

SOVIET OBJECTIVES & INTERESTS

Soviet Union's political objectives in the Indian Ocean region, which took shape in the post-Stalin period, were primarily related to cultivating and supporting the newly independent Afro-Asian states of the Indian Ocean littoral as a part of its global strategy of countering the Western "containment" policy.

India, Indonesia, and Egypt initially acquired a central position in the Soviet strategy in this region. According to the author, the Soviet Union achieved remarkable success in India. Eighty per cent of India's total weapons inventory, including equipment manufactured under licences or adapted, has been estimated to be derived from the Soviet Union. As a consequence, India has tended to support Soviet policies in Asia on questions like Afghanistan and Kampuchea. India also played a central role in the Soviet strategy to counter China in Asia.

Apart from India, the Soviet Union demonstrated great 'interventionist' capability in the Angolan civil war. Besides, military cooperation with Libya and a Treaty of Friendship with Syria (1980) were important diplomatic gains. The Soviet involvment in Ethiopia, Mozambique, Iraq, and South Yemen are also evidences of Soviet successes in gaining influence in the Indian Ocean littoral. The Soviet Union, of course, suffered serious setbacks in Egypt and Somalia.

The Soviet Union's economic interests in the Indian Ocean lie in conducting trade with the West, and providing economic and military assistance to Third World nations in its own ships. While India has been among the biggest recipients of Soviet economic and military assistance in a wide range of items, Soviet Union has also been involved in the economic development of Pakistan, particularly in the steel sector. Other countries in the Indian Ocean littoral which have figured prominently in Soviet economic relations are Iraq, South Yemen, Ethiopia, Bangladesh, Kuwait and Iran.

SOVIET COMMUNICATIONS & DEFENSIVE NETWORKS

The Indian Ocean is also vital to the Soviet communication network. It provides an all-weather link between the Far Eastern provinces of the USSR and the Black Sea. The Soviet Union has significant stakes in Indian Ocean fishing too, and uses the ports and facilities of various littoral states for this purpose. Questions are also sometimes raised whether domestic energy shortages in the Soviet Union will force the Soviet leaders to intervene in the Gulf to safeguard its interests. (The experinece of 1990-91 Gulf War should put such questions at rest).

The Soviet Union's strategic interests in the Indian Ocean have to be seen both in the global and regional contexts. In the global context, the Ocean aquired importance for the Soviets on account of submarine launched offensive systems established by the United States. The Soviet naval deployment in the Indian Ocean has been basically defensive. In the regional context, questions like Soviet Union's conflict with China, the crisis in Afghanistan, the turbulence in Baluchistan, the instability in Iran are some of the issues which conditioned Soviet strategic behaviour in the Indian Ocean region.

SUPER POWER PRESENCE & RELATED RESPONSES

Apart from discussing the interests and objectives of the two super powers in the Indian Ocean, the author has also described at length the evolution of the US and Soviet strategies, and has made an evaluation of these strategies in separate chapters. There is also a detailed chapter

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on US naval facilities in the Indian Ocean.

A separate chapter examines the response of regional powers, namely Australia, India, Iran, the Gulf Cooperation Council, and Pakistan to super power presence in the Indian Ocean.

There is also an interesting chapter on proposals and prospects of arms control in the Indian Ocean, in particular the proposal with regard to the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace (1OZP) and Naval Arms Limitation Talks (NALT) between the two super powers.

Given the range of issues discussed and the comprehensiveness brought to bear on the discussion, the book should be regarded as a valuable addition to scholarly material on the subject

The book, however, suffers from a basic flaw. The central hypothesis of the book, i.e. "the purposes and entry of each super power into the Indian Ocean have been largely independent of the capabilities and intentions of the other" *(p.185)* is not sustained by material and arguments provided in the book. For instance, the very first 'political' objective of the United States that the author talks of is that of limiting or undermining Soviet influence, wherever possible *(p. 59)*. Similarly, while talking of Soviet strategic objectives, the author refers to the US deployment of Polaris A-3 nuclear submarines, the establishment by the US of communication stations in North West Australia and Ethiopia, the creation of BIOT and development of the Diego Garcia facility; and says that all these developments, "could not be viewed as peaceful ventures by the Soviet leadership" *(p.131)*.

The second flaw of the book is that even when the book was published, i.e. in (1987), the data in quite a few cases was ten years old. (The international scene and contexts and equations of super power rivalry have both changed since, etc.)

What must, however, be said to the credit of the author is that being a Pakistani scholar, he has not allowed his 'nationalist bias' to affect his judgements while dealing with Indian or Soviet policies and attitudes.

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[Editor's Note: The delay in publication is regretted]

VICTIM-EYEWITNESS TO A VIOLENT CHANGE

Jahanara Imam : OF BLOOD AND FIRE
(translated into English by Mustafizur Rahman)
Sterling Publishers, Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, p. 246 Rs. 200.

Review by Anima Bose

The Bengali original of the book is *"Ekattorer Deenguli"* by Jahanara Imam, published in 1986. I recall reading this book which created a sensation at that time, because it was the first-ever account of the War of Independence in Bangladesh, in 1971. The Bengali title means "Those Days of 1971", which was really a Diary that Jahanara Imam kept from March 1st, 1971 to 17th December 1971, the day Bangladesh flag was hoisted in the morning on the roof-top of their own house by Jahanara. (The surviving members of the family and some guests were then present there). The Bengali original had four editions in quick succession, something not very common in this sub-continent.

A SAD NARRATION OF HUMAN TRAGEDY & OF TRIUMPH

Mustafizur Rahman has rendered a yeoman's service to the readers at large, who may not be able to read Bengali, by translating into English this poignant and human creation which faithfully chronicles the bloodshed, suppression and violence that took place in the then eastern parts of Pakistan, culminating into a war for independence and liberation.

Rahman's title of *"Of Blood And Fire"* given to those days of 1971, tells the inhumanly cruel and ruthless action of the army which stunned the world, when it got to learn about it. The sad description of those events to which Jahanara had herself been a witness, events in which her family was deeply involved, and the fact that one of her two sons, Rumi, who actively participated in the war of liberation, never came back, are the notes which add a stark reality and personal involvement that make the book one of the most important primary documents of the War of Independence that resulted in the birth of Bangladesh.

I recall, we started a course on the emergency of Bangladesh at St. Louis University, U.S.A., where I was a visiting professor, at the request of the students there. The students took a leading part in organising a fund-raising function. Shri Ravi Shankar was invited to play the *sitar* which he did along with Alla Rakha on the *tabla*. To the amount raised thus, the students, I remember, and several members of other faculties, added the amount they collected by contributing the money they would have spent on their lunch that day.

The movement for liberation was pioneered by the students and the intellectuals of East Pakistan, though later, people from all walks of life joined it. It touched me to see how the students and teachers of the St. Louis University took an active part in collecting funds in 1972.

The English translation by Rahman is very readable and follows the original faithfully. The English title prepares the readers for the ordeal by fire and blood-bath that Bangladesh's war of liberation turned out to be. The power of human determination, courage, idealism and the demand for human dignity were indicated once more. The language, as in the original, is controlled in translation. However, many of the phrases, so apt in Bengali, could not be translated into English. That is always a challenge for any translator.

The Bengali novel *"Purba-Paschim"* (Eash West) by Sunil Ganguli, published in 1986, has used this diary/book by Jahanara Imam as one of the primary sources. The story of her family, their contribution to the war of libertion and the commitment and active participation of her son, Rumi, have been well integrated into this novel. The novel (in two parts) has been dedicated to "Jahanara Imam and to all the dedicated mothers of the world like her."

This book has been authored by a woman, sensitive and courageous. It is hoped that historians and research scholars will make good use of this primary source written by an eye-witness to the events, Jahanara Imam, when they write this history of Bangladesh. An authentic account of contemporary history is rarely available. From that angle, this book supplies that rare source and should go a long way to enhance an in-depth analysis of the war of liberation of Bangladesh.

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A MEMORY, A DREAM & ADVENTURE IN INDIA

Peter Holt : IN CLIVE'S FOOTSTEPS

Hutchinson (Imprint of Random Centre Ltd.(1990) pp 211, price £ 9.25.

Review by Madhu Singh

One hundred and sixty miles north of London is the sleepy little village of Moreton Say. Lord Robert Clive of India was born here at Styche Hall and buried in the family vault of the church. In 1911, almost a century and a half later, a plaque was erected– "Robert Clive, K.B. is buried here within the walls of this church". It bears his coat of arms featuring an elephant and ends with the words "Primus in India". Not much of a memorial to the man who was the founder of British India, and an Empire that lasted two centuries.

The 34 years' old, Peter Holt, five–times over grandson of Clive came awake in class at the name of his ancestor. He dreamt of seeing the places where Clive lived, from the age of seven or eight. This dream he realized in 1988–89, only to find that like all dreams there was not much substance to it in reality. The journey (for Holt is an extensive traveller and a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society) was to have been a sentimental one; but from the very start at No. 45 Barkley Square, where Clive resided from 1758 and shot himself 16 years later ("a plain, insignificant, little room ... filled with clutter, old maps and card–bord boxes"), .. through South Eastern India, it was nothing but depressing and a let–down.

The concept of such a trip is undeniably attractive and unique, and Mr. Holt inter–weaves historical accounts of Clive with his own experiences adroitly. In an absolutely frank and uncompromising manner, he traces Clive's sojourn in India—his arrival, his marriage, his battles, his rule and his recall in disgrace to England, all the while delineating his character. He incorporates in the book the scathing remarks about Clive by his contemporaries and historians alike, so that Clive emerges as a conniving man driven by ambition and greed. Holt goes so far as to lay the blame of the corruption rampant today in India at his ancestor's doorsteps.

However, the harsh realities of India tend to obsess him more than Clive's feelings and experiences. In an attempt to view Fort St. George from the sea, as would have been Clive's first glimpse of it, Holt takes a ride on a yacht. His ire at the muck, traffic, poverty, noise and smells, is taken out on the young woman who takes him and he describes her as a "yuppy" and bossy". In fact, the first chapter reveals only the harsh, 'judgemental' and disgruntled British side of the author, rather than what the jacket of the book says :– "an enthusiast, (with) a pleasant sense of humour and a sort of charm". Perhaps it is culture shock which brought out the ill–humour for, in all fairness, I have to admit that from his Pondicherry trip, the tone changes, somewhat. He describes the country–side and the small cities accurately, without prejudice, and only a little distaste. Could one say that Pondi and his trip to Kallikoti Shiva temple had some mystic influence on his psyche ? Certainly, meeting Walt, the faith–healing pastor and Dr. Ramesh Singh Chouhan, helped him to settle into his Indian experience.

Reading the book, it becomes apparent that it has emerged out of a diligently maintained journal. The approach is workmanlike and that of a social scientist. He is a keen observer and misses nothing from the fake Lacoste sports shirts, the Roebok shoes, the craze for Rombo and Samartha Fox posters, the black–market for foreign exchange, the impact of Salman Rushdi's book, to the suicidal Maruti drivers. He reads the news–papers and guide–books for data, and co–relates the official with the un–official by talking, talking to every–one possible, and then he explains (a monkey, unlike the animals in a zoo, is not treated unkindly, he is served as Hanuman, the Monky–God) and pithily commets on all. He peels off the layers of our dulled sensitivities and exposes us as we appear to others. He has spared nobody, not the Anglophile, not pastors, not the British, nor the Indians, be they rich or poor. Sometimes with humour at others with startling acidity, he exposes the India populace. As such his book is not going to be very popular here, and nor does it act as an incentive to the tourist to visit India despite the little–known things like the nadi–palm–leaf reader being thrown in.

As a travelogue, the book is no different from the many others written about India. Like all the rest, he has a dig at Calcutta (Clive became the Governor General), Qouting from Clive, Churchill "Morehouse, he adds his own bit by calling it" a city in urgent need of disaster"; Kali an "an axe–weilding psycho–path" and its (Calcutta) people, "deranged locusts". In the Victoria Memorial (described as "what the British rule was all about"), he sees one of the few remaining statues of Clive portrayed as "his usual doom laden self, weighed down by responsibility and nagged by il–health". The G.P.O. building now stands on the cell which housed the Black Hole of Calcutta (he questions the veracity of this story), which led to the attack of the British in 1757 on Siraj–ud–daula at Plassey and the chase to Murshidabad. Philip Mason calls it "the most miserable skrimish to be called a decisive battle", for the British lost 4 Europeans and 14 sepoys. To–day, the mango–grove where the army camped hosts a sugar factory, and the hunting lodge is a tourist rest house with a dusty scale–model of the battle. 'Murshidabad', where Mir Jafar (Holt here makes a circumspect reference to Rajiv Gandhi's comment about V.P.Singh !) gifted £ 1,80,000 worth of gems and gold to the 32 year old Clive, is now the home of the B.S.F. and a place of crumbling palaces (Nimak Haram Deori being one) and mosques. Holt meets the

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eight times great–grandson of Mir Jafar here. Talk of destiny and conincidence! But what should have been a momentous encounter, is a wimp, like all else.

It is, thus, the choice of his destinations, since he is on an historical trail, that makes this book somewhat different. Neiter his attempt to travel by bullock–cart, nor by boat, in Clive's foot–steps, meets with any measure of success. The latter account, however, is definitely the most readable section of the book. What makes it all bearable for him (and for us) is his taxi driver, China, who not only takes him in his rickety Ambassador ("these cumbersome beasts") to Plassey and Murshidabad, but also around Calcutta's red–light areas. This diversion into sleaze, Holt justifies as Clive has reportedly got the clap many times, and Siraj–ud–daula was fond of *mujras*. And so, he talks to the call–girls, the taxi–drivers, bus conductors, clerks, pundits, C.P.I. members, bag–packers, unemployed youngmen, members of the British community and many others. The stories and quotes he picks up from these variegated sources may be biased and misleading, but the facts about the Leprosy Institue are informative and revalatory. It is with such back–tracking on his general attitude that Holt reveals the caring side of his character.

What promised to be a good read, was not so. Holt needs to polish his writing style if he is to hold the interest of his readers. This is neither a straight travel book, nor an adventure, and not even a historical one. It is this attempt to merge all these elements together that produces such a disorganised effect. One ends up reading the jottings in a journal of a journey through the parts of India that Clive covered in the eighteenth century, as they are today, (which was the averred purpose) interespersed with personal experiences and observations. These are revealing of India and Indians, but the main theme is nearly drowned, just like the boat they hired from Mr. Jim–Jam of the silk payjamas.

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METAPHYSICS OF HUMAN EXISTENCE

Arnab Guha : MEMOIRS OF A MAD DOG
Writers' Workshop, Calcutta, (1988), Rs. 80/-

Review by N. K. Ghosh

Nearly half a century ago, Raja Rao, in his 'Foreword' to *Kanthapura*, expressed the difficulties faced by an Indian writer (writing in English) when he wrote : "One has to convey in a language that is not one's own the spirit that is one's own. . . The tempo of Indian life must be infused into our English expression, even as the tempo of American or Irish life has gone into the making of theirs."

Though it will be unfair to evaluate Arnab Guha's collection of poetry in the light of the fruitful advice offered by Raja Rao, one cannot help questioning the lack of distinctive Indian sensibility in his poetry. Even a cursory glance through *Memoirs of a Mad Dog* reveals the pervasive influence of T.S. Eliot whose idiom and diction seem to overshadow Arnab's poetic canvas. At the same time, one cannot miss his humble acknowledgement to Eliot from whom he has learnt to express "an unexpressed expression of/unfulfilled desire."

He writes in the opening section of the book :

"How do I describe my/unfulfilled desire?/ I call myself a poet : /a clerk writing cliches/about life's insignificant moments/ trying to find the significance/of Life's insignificant moments.". . .

"You are alive?/And your are dead?/That sounds so wonderfully/like that fellow Eliot/And excuse this plagiarist/who picked the old poet's bones."

Arnab Guha's self-conscious awareness of the powerful presence of Eliot in his poetry seems to haunt him all along, for he says :

"don't be hollow/be original/don't think in cliches/eavesdrop into your own self/ discover your own voice/find your own language/your own metaphors."

When he does that, he comes out with beautiful poetic utterances like :

"Never underestimate the potential of/ Evil./For there lie the seeds/of the Truest Equation."

And, again, "In the storm/of Time/ stones disintegrate/but their quarries remain/full of unfinished dreams/ unfulfilled hopes/and half-eaten candies."

He confesses : "I have neither/Russel nor Rabindranath/nor Socrates/nor Dante nor Kant/Only bits and pieces/of lost dreams/like bits and pieces of moonlight/ which I try to join together/when it's dark/ as if searching/for something."

Arnab's *Memoirs* has three sections. The first is titled Haemon Cried and is divided into three parts : 'The Flower—God Resurrection' ; 'The Exile'; and 'The Sanctury'.

Likewise, the second section is divided into three parts : 'Breakfast'; 'Luncheon'; and 'Supper', representing the morning, the noon, and the sunset of human existence.

The third section is titled 'The Song of the Slaughterhouse.'

It is evident from the very outset that Arnab's main concern is not with the reality around him; but with the metaphysics of human existence. An exile within himself, he desperately tries to "view the world/through my own eyes" but "Memories percolate/within me/And I forget the meaning and purpose/of what I write."

The image of 'the Man on the Moon' is a recurrent one in the second section of the book, and the main thrust here is on changeability and changelessness. His principal themes are alienation and the virtual aimlessness of modern existence. He sees "boredom/in a cigarette/smile in tears/beauty in the ugliness/of serpentine/ drains", and finds in dirt "only particles/ of disintegrated nothingness."

Despite the relative paucity of both lived and felt experience, Arnab's poetry shows traces of brilliance at least in terms of metaphysical conceits. Although he says at one place, "I know I am/no poet/only a simple reporter of facts", the reader does stand to be delighted with his occasional lapses into the realms of the truly poetic.

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HOW IS INDIA DOING ?

Editors : R.A. Choudhury, Shama Gamkhar, and Aurobindo Ghose.
THE INDIAN ECONOMY AND ITS PERFORMANCE SINCE INDEPENDENCE,
Oxford University Press Delhi: (1990) pp. 315, price ; Rs. 240

Review by Jandhyala B.G. Tilak

"How is India doing?".

It is not only Indian economists, but economists around the world have also been continuously occupied with this question, Perhaps this is because, from the performance of the Indian economy characterised by mixed economic system, democratic political structure, socialistic planning, somewhat 'inward' foreign policies including less reliance on foreign debt, 'welfare statism', second largest population on the globe, and mass poverty—several valuable lessons can be discerned by other developing countries of the world. It is also believed that after four decades of trial and error, India has come out with some important strategies for its own development, besides their emulation by other economies. Hence a retrospective introspection of our development strategies would be of much significance for a developing economy, planning to enter the 21st centurty with a big bang.

The book under review is a collection of 24 papers on various dimensions of economic development of post–independent India, 21 of which were originally presented in a two–day seminar on 'Performance of the Indian Economy Since Independence' organised by the Kirorimal College (Univeristy of Delhi) in 1985. Three other most famous papers —"How is India Doing" by Amartyà Sen (which is based on papers published by Sen in the *New York Review of Books* (1982), *Economic Journal* (1983), and another essay prepared in honour of S.J. Patel), the first G.L. Mehta memorial lecture by Sukhamoy Chakravarty on India's development strategies, and the third G.L. Mehta memorial lecture by Raj Krishna on inter–State disparities — are added to crown the seminar papers included in the collection.

Sen summarises his analysis thus : India "is doing quite well in many specific respects ... But this record has to be assessed in the light of the persistent inequities and the basic weakness of modern India that sustains them. It is a weakness that is not being conquered" *(p. 21)*. Sukhamoy Chakravarty also comes to a similar conclusion : the development strategies ignored demand deficiencies, and concentrated on supply side constraints, and such strategies "could not make a major impact on the lives of the vast masses of people" despite significant achievements in economic growth. On the other hand, Kaushik Basu argues that we have reached a stage of economic achievement where there is reason for joy. It is "time we jettison [ed] our pessimism" *(p. 106)*.

Raj Krishna analyses INTER–STATE DISPARITIES in a Centre-Periphery framework, characterised by a strong centre, and peripheral role of the States, and quantifies the persistence of, and in some cases even an increase in inter–State disparities in the movement of various indices of development. The uneven inter–State distribution of agricultural development is also highlighted by G.S. Bhalla. Dalip Swamy argues that trends in deliberate centralisation in the decision–making process have led to Centre–State financial strains, and even to an assault on the very federal fabric of the Republic. As Sanjaa Baru notes, the States have been assigned with major role in development, their resource base is not commensurate with it.

Scholarly accounts are also presented on poverty, agricultural development, industrial development, etc., though some of the papers are very short. Some of the prominent authors include Ranjit Sau, P.S. Jha, Arun Bose, Aurobindo Ghose, S.D. Tendulkar, etc. Excepting a few papers on agriculture, industry, and poverty, a majority of papers deal with general aspects of economic development, with no specific focus.

Very few economists in this volume have paid serious attention to issues other than 'core' economic ones, such as human capital. A M. Khusro briefly refers to the performance of the economy in literacy. He notes that though literacy has been increasing, the number of illiterates is also increasing. In this context, he identifies three important phases : *Phase I*– when population increases, but the increase in population is slower; *Phase II*–literacy, and the number of literates increase and illiteracy and number of illiterates also decrease but slowly, and *Phase III*– in which percentage of literacy is higher than the percentage of illiteracy, and the absolute number of illiterates declines. He concludes that India has moved from phase I to phase II, and is now on the threshold of crossing into phase III! Kamal Kabra also refers to human capital components, and decries that skills, cultural levels and socio–political processes do not figure prominently in economists' analysis of development (or lack of it).

By the end of 1990, the Indian economy took a new direction, involving: 'opening up' of the economy to outside, liberalisation, privatisation, modernisation, etc., as a natural response to increasing financial problems:— bulging trade deficits, depleting foreign exchange reserves, increasing levels of 'consumerism' and accompanied increase in prices.

What are the culminating critical factors that contributed to these problems?

Those who expect to have some answers to such questions from a book published in 1990, may not be totally satisfied with the book. Quite often the reader feels that the accounts are dated, *e.g.*, references to the approach to the Seventh Five Year Plan, the annual budget, etc. Otherwise, the book is a very good collection.

Some major omissions include analyses on trade, prices, taxation, income distribution, and social sectors like health, education, unemployment, etc. A little bit of pruning, would also have enriched the quality of the book. Nevertheless, on the whole, the book provides a scholarly refreshing reading.

Long associated with NIEPA (National Institute of Educational Planning and Administion) New Delhi, Dr. Jandhyala B.G. Tilak is now editor of the Journal of Educational Planning and Administration.

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A HINDI STORY FROM RURAL BIHAR

by Rita Shukla — translated by H.M. Chatterjee

FAREWELL TO BABA

CHUKSHU-DAHA —SORROWS OF THE BLIND

(From the Original Hindi Book — *Kronch Vadh Tatha Anya Kahaniyan)*

Bhrigunath Baba, a living image of misery incarnate is of my village, Tiwaripur. But let me tell you all about his house before I introduce him to you.

On the western side of the village are two mud-houses. Every morning the disc of the early rising sun peeps through the space in between the two houses. Out of these, the one on the right belongs to Bhrigunath Baba's own brother Sadanath Tiwari. The walls of this house are also of mud, but its foundation is very solid—like the solid prosperity of Sadanath Baba. The heavy udders of the cow, Gouri, tied at the threshold, give evidence to the good health of Sadanath Baba. The two *banihars* (farmhands) can be seen in the courtyard engaged in various jobs of the farmhouse.

The glittering heavy chain round the neck of Jamuna Aaji and the perpetual smile on her lips, both make it difficult for the beholders to judge which is brighter.

Bhrigunath Baba is spending his life under the benevolence of these people.

He wipes his sightless eyes with a torn corner of his soiled dhoti again and again as he identifies each person approaching him. "Who is it?" "*Babua*?" (Son?) "*Bachiya*?" (Daughter?) "*Bhaiya* Ho Tu?" (Brother, is it you?)

His innocent smile showers heartfelt blessings which fills one's heart and soul with love and affection.

Bhrigunath Baba is blind from birth, "You don't have eyes — how do you manage?"

"It's all a game of God, daughter! *Mai* (mother) saw the solar eclipse when I was in her womb. Ramji took away the light of my eyes. After all, this world has to go by His will. When I was born my mother wept and wailed— Oh, Surya Devi ! why didn't you take away my sight? What sin did this innocent babe commit?

"I did not die, daughter! After all, who else would have borne the joys and sorrows, vice and virtues, fated as my share, in this world?"

* * *

Every morning and evening, the shout of Sadanath Baba can be heard from the verandah—"Bhrigunath Baba, come soon, food is ready." Boiled corn, mashed potatoes, salt and chillies. Flat cakes of wheat flour mixed with flour of oats and *masoor dal*.

Sometimes, the cold winter evenings would tickle Baba's appetite and he is tempted to express a wish. "O *Bhowji* today I feel like having *ghee* and *arhar dal*." The sweet smell of the earth, wet with the first drizzle of the monsoon excites his Bhojpur taste —"Son Bilas, tell *Bhowji* to make *sattu ki litti*, mashed Brinjal and fresh *dahi*." The two daughters-in-law of Sadanath snigger mockingly— "Look at the blindman's fancy— not on ounce of flesh on his body, but his tongue is very spicy. *Roti* with *ghee* and *arhar dal*, *litti* and *dahi*! Ho, ho, ho!"

Jamuna Aaji scolds the daughters-in-law. "Why do you snigger like wild cats? Poor fellow is an afflicted being. What wrong does he do if he speaks out his heart's desire?" Then she whispers, giving them a lesson in worldly wisdom— "Be grateful that he does not give a thought to take his share of the property. If he was normal, half the property would have gone from our hands. What will the village folks think? As it is, Dewarji's mind is as simple as a meek cow. He is a passive, contented man. Whatever is given to him, he eats and wears."

* * *

"Baba, don't you pine for your son? Don't you ever want to meet him?"

"Yes, I do! I long to do so. What father is there in this world whose heart does not crave for his child? The soul of Raja Dashrath is immersed in every fate, daughter, who becomes a father."

The temple's pundit, Jagdeo, begins reciting *Ramayana* one month before Ramanaumi. Bhrigunath Baba is always the first to be present and the last to leave. Listening to the chapter of Rama's exile in the wilderness and the death of Dashrath, Baba sobs unceasingly. Without Rama, Dashrath is as helpless as a bird without wings, his face as withered as a lotus without roots.

And Bhrighunath Baba changed too. The white sightless eyes sunk deep in their sockets wet with tears—like a helpless child who has lost the hand of his mother and is lost in the crowd of a *mela*.

He had searched every nook and corner of the village walking with his stick as a guide. "Has anyone seen my Mohana? Only till yesterday he used to say— 'Father, when I finish my education, all your misery will be over, Then I will not let you stay here.' An innocent boy of fourteen years. God knows where he must be wandering. O Ramji! who gave him this exile?

"No, daughter! God is my witness if I ever scolded him. O, yes! I remember — that evening he did have some arguments with *Barki Bahuria* (eldest daughter-in-law). I had scolded him a little. 'Keep quiet Mohana, Bhowji is like a mother – don't argue with her'. But Mahavirji only knows that I did not intend to be harsh with him."

Barki Bahuria, meaning Jamuna Aaji's elder *Bahu*, has a sharp tongue and is a proud daughter of a rich father who owns four oxen to plough his fields, as also a brick house of his own. This pride is stamped on her face, her manner of talking and her behaviour.

She could not stand the sight of the son of Bhrigunath Baba. Mohana had run away after only two years of her marriage. The story of those days was related by an eye-witness, Annapurna Kaki :– "There is no difference between a woman and a *churail* (feminine evil spirit) if she does not possess a mother's heart. Father, a Dhritirashtra, mother a mute who survived for only about two years after the birth of Mohana. It was the month of *Bhadon* (rainy season) –a dark night with no moon — *(amavasya)*. She came from the back door and laid herself down on the ground, writhing in pain and died; didn't even give time to be taken to the hospital. Bhrigunath Tiwari was left wailing, holding the tiny infant to his heart. Daughter, I have not seen a more sharp-tongued woman in my parents' house, nor in the house of my in-laws. She would never call Mohana by his name. She always called him *Toora*, (orphan).

And what kind of *roti*? Two days' stale,

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on top of that—oil and salt —no ghee, no vegetable."

* * *

Bhrigunath Tiwari understood everything, but kept quiet. The dumbness of his dead wife had stilled his live tongue. She could not speak and you could not see — if you could have seen—what would have happened, Bhrigunath Baba? What all would you have seen? The thread-bare *saree* of your wife? The mud-soiled hair or her dirty body soiled with mud and cow-dung!

Jamuna Aaji had told the whole village, "My blind brother-in-law is now settled. What if she is dumb, my sister is very gifted. I have handed over all the duties, right from the cooking to the stores to her, and now I am free from all care."

What kind of stores and what sort of duties? Comments used to go round at the river-side: "Have you seen the wife of Bhrigunath? She is as meek and docile in looks as in character. A lamb put in the hands of a female butcher, tortured day and night. *Jamuna Devi* has become a Maharani. It is heard that she doesn't even pour a glass of water for herself. She seats herself on a stool and gets all the work done, right from tying up her hair to putting *alta* on her feet. Just image, in her condition, is it right to allow her to carry so many pitchers of water? Oh! the sight of a pregnant cow and a pregnant women evokes sympathy and pity even in the heart of a stranger. Just wait and see, the poor woman will not be given any rest till the last day of her confinement."

What happiness the birth of Mohana had brought to the dumb mother? Annapurna Kaki and the other village women were ten-fold more happy. Out of fear of getting a bad name, Jamuna Aaji had celebrated the birth half-heartedly. The women of the locality were invited; oil and vermilion were put on the partings of hair on their heads. The delight of Annapurna Kaki was expressed in the enthusiastic thumping of the *dholak* as she sat with it throughout the evening.

Sita has given birth to a jewel. Who is going to take care of him, who would run to and from to attend to his needs? Not that Baba did not do anything. His eyes were in the tips of his fingers— the skin of his body was where his pupils resided. A few seconds of solitude at night would melt the ache in his heart. The tears in his sightless eyes flowed down, falling on his wife's closed eyelids, on her ever-closed lips. Then the dumb wife's trembling hand would rest on his back as she silently consoled him – "You have no eyes, I have no tongue – our love will make up for all. We will live through our painful days together, sharing our misery with each other."

When Mohana was born Baba had said, "He has awakened in me a new desire to live —let his name be Mohana." Bhrigunath Baba's wife was known to the whole village as *Gungi Aaji*. She would put little Mohana, wrapped up in a rag, in Baba's arms and busy herself in the chores of the house, and Mohana would rock and chuckle in Baba's lap. Baba would walk up and down in the warm sun, in winter, with Mohana dressed in a woollen sweater and cap. The village women would look at the babe and remark pitifully, "Alas, the mother has no tongue, the father cannot see. Who would speak and who would call — Oh! What a chubby baby!"

* * *

The day *Gungi Aaji* died, Mohana still clung to the shoulders of Baba. When the dead body was being taken out, Baba had wailed piteously — "Listen, you folks, whom would this Mohana call now? Oh Mohana, today you have become an orphan!" The wailing of Bhrigunath Baba would have melted a stone. The untimely death of his wife had made him mad, perhaps. Leaving his ancestral house, he now wanted to live in the cow-shed. He alone knows why this crazy idea cropped up in his mind. On the day of the *Sraadh* of Gungi Aaji, he had declared. "Sadanath Bhaiya! I have a request. Now I am not going to live in this room. Please send all my belongings to the cow-shed. Mohana will also live there." The soft mutterings of Jamuna Aaji could be heard by all the women who were present. "As if he is the only man to become a widower -- as if no other man ever lost his wife. This is just to show off to the world. Now he will live in the cow-shed—so that the neighbours spit on us saying— what unkind *Bhai* and *Bhowji* we are that we have turned him out of this house."

Baba also came to know of this. When his Bhowji brought his food and was going back, he asked her to wait a little. "Wait Bhowji. I want to clear a misunderstanding in your mind. Ramji has not made it possible for me to serve anyone. I have to live with my head down throughout my life on your and Bhaiya's kindness. I don't want any portion of the house, Bhowji. For me, my Kasi, Haridwar are at your feet, and this orphan child is my heaven."

Bhrigunath Baba's blind world had found its heaven in the love of Mohana. Jamuna Aaji was taken aback at these words. Sadanath Baba got the floor of the cow-shed raised. The walls were white-washed. The cow-shed was changed to look somewhat like a house.

* * *

Bhrigunath Baba had put his thumb impression on a blank paper, relinquishing all his claims in the property. Because of this legal document, the elder daughter-in-law could speak so boldly— "Why do you show such arrogance, Mohana Baba! The cricket is proud of its thin legs. Forget about milk or curds. Thank your stars that you are getting two rotis to eat; otherwise who would support one like you when things are so expensive. Here we have to bear the burden of a living corpse for a whole life time."

Jamuna Aaji had somehow pacified Bhrigunath Baba, making false excuse. "Gouri cow is now dry. Barhki's child cannot live without milk, so we buy a *pao* (1/4 of a seer) of milk. If you say, we can do the same for Mohana."

Mohana had thrown his books on the shelf, "Does Barki Bhowji think, we are beggars? She keeps uttering abuses. I have seen with my own eyes. The milk of Gouri cow was put on the stove; it was not less than half a pail. When I told her, she started abusing me—The blind man's son sees a lot more than is good for him."

Returning from school, Mohana had gone to sleep hungry. Poor Bhrigunath Baba was feeling the protruding bones of his son's body with his fingers as he sat still like a statue.

* * *

Sadanath Tiwari, the elder brother of Baba, had called the two farm-hands Bilas and Swaroop instructing them in an extra-loud voice so that Baba could also hear. "Go and search for Mohana in the neighbouring villages. It is quite possible that he has been misled by one of his school friends. If he is not there, then go upto Baranpur. Who knows he might have gone to his *Mama's* place. These boys of today —*Sasur* (used as a word of abuse) — think too much of themselves as soon as they are hardly able to read a few words. It does not take much time for them to become way-ward."

Bhrigunath Baba had pleaded with Bilas and Swaroop. "Don't beat the boy. He is young and foolish. Someone must have lured him away. Bring him back tactfully."

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Baba was very upset. His whole body was numb— even the hair of the pores of his skin. Any sound— any word— any shout would startle him. He got up startled at the sound of the *lathis* (staves) of Bilas and Swaroop. "Did you find anything?"

At the sound of his elder brother's voice, he suddenly stopped in the verandah of the cow-shed. "No Master, we met Baranpur's *Pahun* (i.e. Mohana's *Mama*) on the way. Mohan Babu has not gone there. But we met Sarju Thakur's son of Barka Gaon, Mohan Babu's school friend. Two days ago, Mohan Babu had told him that he would leave the village and run away and that he will come back after he had earned a lot of money!"

* * *

Sadanath Tiwari kept showering abuses on Mohana for a long time. "It is better to be childless than to have such a son. His milk teeth haven't fallen yet and *Sasur* has gone out to earn a living. Wasn't he getting enough to eat here? Such is the world— you spend your life for others, but all you get is ingratitude in return —never a word of thanks."

Bhrigunath Baba's back-bone bent over before time. His hair turned white. The pain behind his smile was unbearable. Very often the knocking of his stick could be heard as he went to the *Thakurbari* (temple)—Thunk -Thunk- Thunk!

"What! ho ! Dhritirashtra Maharaj! Any news of your good son?"

And Bhrigunath Baba would silently shake his head. " Punditji you are an astrologer. You can read the lines of the hand. I want to ask you just one thing. Do I have to spend my whole life in grief? There is no happiness in my life. When will the thread of my life break, Punditji? I cannot bear it any more."

Jagdeo Pundit tries to put a soothing balm on the wounds of Baba's heart—two seconds of consolation— two words of assurance— "You are a religious man, Bhrigunath Bhai. You have never hurt anybody's heart. A son thrives on his father's faith and prayers. Isn't it so? Wherever Mohana is, he must be alright. Don't lose courage, Bhai! One day he will surely come and stand before you!"

"When will be come Punditji? This is the only hope on which I live now. I tell you truly!"

* * *

The lamp shelf in Bhrigunath Baba's room is empty. After Jamuna Aaji's death the housekeeping of Sadanath Baba's household is now in the hands of the elder daughter-in-law, *Barki*. She argues, justifying herself, that— "For a blind man, light and darkness are the same. Is kerosene oil less expensive? An old man without eyes, as it is, has no control over his body. He always keeps stumbling. If he falls on the lantern, his last rites will be over!"

If only Mohana would come back before he dies. "If he would perform my last rites, this miserable body will be disposed off properly." This hope keeps burning in Baba's head like the sound of a ghost in the dark.

When the whole village is asleep, then very often the thuk- thuk sound of Bhrigunath Baba's lathi can heard as he paces about restlessly. "Baba has gone crazy." "He cannot sleep. Poor fellow, what can he do." "Separation from the son has made him mad." "Oh ! What if he is killed by a thief or a hooligan !"

* * *

There is a main road in the village—a mud road, but quite wide. All who go to Arrah–Buxur for shopping have to board the bus from this road.

As a rule, Bhrigunath Baba spends one or two hours on the culvert of this road. When buses pass by without stopping, then it does not matter. But if a man from this village gets down, he must greet Baba. "Touch your feet, Baba". Then Baba gets up very slowly. "Isn't this the last bus, Babua?"

"Yes, Baba, come let's go home." The man puts his hand on Baba's shoulders and silently reaches him up to his cow–shed home.

* * *

Baba's habit of sitting at the culvert is not in the least liked by Barki. "The whole day he keeps running after motor vehicles. Why can't he sit at home and split wood for fuel? In our village, there was a man exactly like him, but he did all the household work, inside as well as outside, so deftly that no body could say he was blind. *Kakaji* (uncle)gets everything without lifting a hand. If he had to do everything for himself, his hands and feet would move faster."

* * *

The whole village is gathered at the cow–shed of Sadanath Tiwari. Bhrigunath Baba's Mohana has come back to his village after thirteen years. The old Jagdeo Pundit says in a trembling voice as he tries to enter, "O, *Bachiya* ! – O, *Bahuria*, just let me go in."

"Move–make way." "Punditji's words have come true." "After all he is a holy man. Who else will utter God's words if not he?"

"Bhrigunath Baba's penance is over now. The burning blaze of his blind eyes is now quenched at last."

"Where was Mohana?" "All this time where was he?" "He had gone to Assam, Kamrup, the city of Kamakhya."

"Who? The Army people had taken him with them." "Coming from a Brahmin family ! Must have cleaned the dirty dishes of all and sundry."

"Poor thing ! It's all a cycle of fate." "Now look at him–what a handsome young man he has become! He has joined the military–that is why! What did you say? He'll take back Bhrigunath Baba with him!"

* * *

Mohana wants to bring everything before the whole Panchayat. "No, Babuji don't stop me now. Enough is enough. I will not rest till I have made known the fraud and deception of *Barka Bhaiya* and *Bhowji*. Where did all my letters go? All the money I sent by money orders? Their letters written on your behalf were all lies. You just say all this before the *Panchayat*, that is all."

"No, Son, you have returned. I have got back my heaven—my *Swarg*. Now I don't want anything."

No complaints, no grudge, no grievance against any body. Bhrigunath Baba is going away holding the hand of his son. Tears falling from his eyes he says. "May you always flourish in you village home, may you always be happy." As soon as the bus comes, Mohana picks up Baba in his arms and puts him on the bus. The whole village has come out to bid farewell to Baba.

The conductor blows his whistle. Baba lifts up his folded hands out of the window in *Namaskar*! (greetings)!

Now Bhrigunath Baba is seeing through the eyes of Mohana. All the villagers, young and old, stand with tears in their eyes. The saree end of Annapurna Kaki is drenched from crying.

Baba's folded hands can still be seen from far away. "All right, Bhaiya! I take leave of you now–Forgive me my faults."

Dr. (Mrs.) Rita Shukla is University Professor in Hindi, and Dr. (Mrs.) H.M. Chatterjee, University Professor in English at Ranchi. This Collection of 13 stories was given the Gyna Pith Award for best short story collection in the 1984 competition for the new generation of story writers.

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POEMS OF MODERN LIVING & EPICAL MYTHS

Narsingh Srivastava : A FEW DAYS IN BOMBAY
Writers' Workshop, Calcutta, (1990), pp. 46.

Review by N. S. Sahu

Dr. Narsingh Srivastava's, *A Few Days in Bombay*, is an agglomerate of some twenty four long and short poems. The assortment is a nice sample of Indian poetry in English, with its veritable Indian sensibility in terms of tone and temper; it is truly a fresh blossoming of the present time and place.

The short poems (like "Two Generations", "A Road Accident", "A Storm in the House", "Following Darkness", "A Dream of Terrorists", "The Painter's Gift", "Waiting", "Smile", and so on) take the readers into the labyrinths of their poetic conceits and varied emotions woven out. Dr. Srivastava's narrators no longer remain unconcerned with the "suffereings" and "sweats of the shade" *(p. 35)*. Also, they share the joy in smile.

The "Emptiness", of "suffereings", "smiles" and "tears" *(p. 37)*, "misty morning", "huge mountain" *(p. 38)*, the "fourteenth floor roof" *(p. 41)* are some of the involved but engaging images that become the hauntigly "explored signs and miracles", but are helpful to make our readings more than sheer delight in a state of being lost *(p. 26)*.

The thought patterns woven in longer poems (like "A Few Days in Bombay", "The Race Course", "My Grand Father's Son", "The Petition of a Jhuggi", "The Agony of Bhishma Pitamaha" and a few others along side) are samples fo an Arnoldian (high) seriousness on the existential planes of our modern living.

BETWEEN ANCIENT MYTHS & OUR OWN TIMES

In poems like "The Agony of Bhishm Pitamaha", and "Ahalya's Confession", visualing the ancient epical myth of *The Mahabharat* and the remote past, the poet has offered a new solution to a modern man to "take a decision", failing which means to "jeopardise the will" *(p. 26)* and face life "split" "into several parts" *(p. 28)*. This poem is an excellent testimony of skilled artistry, wherein Dr. Srivastava makes us traverse back into the remote past of the "dark designs" and "bloind intentions" *(p. 26)* of the Mahabharat period, before he brings us back to the "fag end of the twentieth century". We get lost in the amusing imagery amidst beautiful "silence" miscalled "acceptance" *(p. 28)*.

Dr. Srivastava demonstrates a fine poetic genius in poems like "A Road Accident", "The Evening of a Metropolis", "A Storm in the House", "Following Darkness", "A Dream of Terrorists", "Ahalya's Confession", "A Begging Bowl" and "A Professor's Predicament". Sometimes the Eliotesque awareness of "senselessness" *(p. 29)*, sometimes Keats' yearning for "easeful death" *(p. 30)*, or on other occasion, a modern man's existential concerns for "bonus or D.A." *(p.30)* seem to fill the "empty hearts" of these men and make them children—like "eat fear and hunger/Before they fall asleep". *(p. 31)*.

Dr. Srivastava also successfully employs the poetic device of lively metaphors and similes, and through his techniques of irony and paradox, he scores his peotic goal. Of course, at times, his poetry sounds like a mighty philosophical declamatory; however the poet does not fail in his mission, and the reader tends to get lost in the pure delight of a beautiful reading of existential, modern poems included in the present collection.

I am sure that on the basis of this collection alone, Dr. Srivastava's claim as a poet of ideas of abiding interest is secure, and the collection would find its niche in the annals of the present-day Indian poetry in English.

Dr. N.S. Sahu, is in the Deptt. of English, University of Gorakhpur (Bihar)

FAREWELL TO BABA—A GLOSSARY OF HINDI WORDS USED IN THE STORY IN ROMAN SCRIPT

Aaji	Grand mother
Alta	Liquid red colour worn on feet by married women and girls
Arhar dal	A kind of pulse
Ata	Flour
Baba	Grandfather
Babua	Son
Bachiya	Daughter
Bahuria	Daughter-in-law in Bhojpuri dialect
Banihar	Farm hand
Barki	Eldest (Feminine)
Bhowji	Elder Brother's wife
Churail	Female evil spirit
Dahi	Curds
Dewarji	Husband's younger brother
Dholak	Percussion musical instrument
Gungi	Dumb
Lathis	Long bamboo sticks
Pahun	Guest, here ued for Mohana's maternal uncle
Pao	Quarter of a seer
Mama	Maternal Uncle
Mela	Fair, fete
Roti	Flat cakes of flour
Sasur	Father-in-law. Here used a word of abuse
Sattu ki litti	Small flour patties filled with spiced gram flour and baked on cow-dung cake fire.
Sraadh	A ritual for the dead held after a few days of the event
Swarg	Heaven, Paradise
Thakurbari	Temple
Toora	Orphan

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EXPLORING INDIA AFRESH

Mark Tully: NO FULL STOPS IN INDIA

Viking Penguin ,New Delhi ,1991, Rs. 250, 336 pages

Review by Madan Gupta

Mark Tully, the BBC representative in India has spent many years in this country. His book *"No Full Stops in India"* gives his assessment and views on various topics based on his travels and talk with different people. The book covers diverse subjects like the Kumbh Mela, the TV serial, Ramayan, Roop Kanwar Sati Episode, Operation Black Thunder, Riots in Ahmedabad etc.

In the Roop Kanwar Sati piece, Mark Tully narrates facts which came out when this sordid incident took place: the stories the newspapers and newsmagazines brought out and the version or colour that women's organisations gave to the incident. The claim made by some women's organisation that Roop Kanwar was forced to commit sati remained unproved. The involvement of politics in the whole business was shameful. Records Mark Tully, "Politicians said if we can have another sati we can bring down the government."

Even though Ram Mohan Roy started a campaign against sati many years ago, the ugly custom still persists. One major reason is that the life of a widow, particularly in rural India, is no better than living death. It is a life of untold misery, deprivation and degradation.

The piece on the Kumbh Mela is interesting as it provides more than a glimpse into the deep routed faith and fervour which makes millions to gather at Allahabad for a bath at the Sangham. Particularly intersting is the observation that in spite of religious faith, in elections these very millions vote for the Congress or the Janta or whatever. Justifiably, therefore, Mark Tully closes the piece by saying, "That is the danger of aggressive secularism. It is a barren creed which can cause great offence to religious people. If secularism leads Indians to think that their rulers are, in the words of that speaker at the Vishwa Hindu Parishad meeting, 'ashamed to call themselves Hindus', the villagers will start to support communal parties. Khomeini was a backlash against a westernized Shah of Iran."

The piece on the TV serial 'Ramayan' is also an interesting piece. It gives the inside story of how the cast was selected, how the serial was shot and so on. According to Mark Tully, the Panjab terrorists could stop Sikhs from watching the serial only temporarily, but not for long. Valmiki's description of Ravan's court, as given by Mark Tully, is particularly intersting. It reads:

"On opulent carpets sprawled
Hundreds of ravishing women
In colourful dresses, drowsed
With wine–drinking
And with love–making ...
Jewels scattered
During dancing and drinking –
Dresses crushed,
Deprived of earrings,
Like overburdened mares
Hastily disburdened ——

Ravan lay, savouring
The sugar–wine breath
Of his wives; some, in stupor,
Kissed the lips of co–wives
Again and again,
Thinking they were Ravan's;
And the co–wives, passionately
In love with Ravan,
Returned the kisses, imagining
They were kissing their lord."

The introduction to the book gives Mark Tully's obsevations on certain important aspects of the current Indian scene which are thought–provoking. Says Mark Tully at one place, "The greatest Indian leader of the century, Mahatma Gandhi, was a deeply religious man, but he campaigned tirelessly against the excesses of his own religion, Hinduism–particularly the humiliation of Harijans or untouchables. At the same time, he knew the danger of ridiculing rather than reforming religion. He believed that, in India at least, politics needed religion. In his autobiography he said: I can say without the slightest hesitation, and yet in all humility, that those who say religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion means."

The Epilogue covers Rajiv Gandhi's tenure as Prime Minister, his murder and the degererated state in which the Congress Party found itself on his death. Voicing the views of many others in this country, mark Tully says, "Rajiv Gandhi left behind a party so sycophantic that within 24 hours of his assassination the leadership was offered to his widow Sonia ... She had lost a husband she loved deeply and was in a state of shock. Nevertheless the Congress Party tried to burden her with its problems because it did not have the confidence to fight a general election unless it was led by a member of the Nehru dynasty ...." Sonia Gandhi's sagacity alone saved the situation.

Compared to Mark Tully's earlier book *"Amritsar, Mrs. Gandhi's Last Battle"*, some readers may find *"No Full Stops In India"* a little tame. However, it is written in a readable and easy style and the opinions it expresses on men and events are interesting and thought provoking.

Mr. Madan Gupta, a regular contributor is now our Editorial Associate in New Delhi

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—Editors

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URBAN ETHNIC RIOTS & SOUTH ASIA

Veena Das (Ed.) : MIRRORS OF VIOLENCE – Communities, Riots and Survivors in South Asia

Oxford University Press, Rs 225

Review by Udayan Majumdar

Though Sri Lanka had witnessed ethnic hostility and strife between Tamils and the Sinhalese in 1958, 1977 and 1981, it was the riots in 1983, unprecedented in their scale of violence and brutality that actually redered the future of the entire Tamil population in the country insecure and uncertain.

Again, a wave of mob violence and rioting, as never before, engulfed the capital city of Delhi, following the assassination of Indira Gandhi on 31 October, 1984. Hundreds of Sikhs were brutally murdered in Delhi and other cities in India.

In Mahatma Gandhi's home State of Gujarat—also his first *karmabhumi*, massive violence broke out in 1985, in the form of an anti–reservations movement claiming hundreds of lives.

In Karachi, large–scale violence was unleashed during December 1986, when bands of Pathans men armed with Kalashnikovs killed people belonging to other communities (mostly the *Muhajirs*) and religious sects; burnt, ransacked and looted their homes and left them helpless amidst charred ruins.

TOWARDS A GENERAL THEORY OF URBAN RIOTS

These are all instances of riots and acts of gruesome violence in cities in different lands and diverse religious, social, economic and political settings in South Asia. Any comprehensive explanation of such riots—a phenomenon so pervasive — would naturally amount to a general theory of riots in urban areas, as well as of violence itself. Not many have really turned their hand to such a task.

Surely then, the contributors to this volume are together ploughing a new furrow by attempting to provide "body and form to general arguments"— forming one coherent theoretical umbrella—about communal or ethnic violence in South Asian cities, while at the same time, they are seeking to understand such riots against Tamils in Colombo, Sikhs in Delhi and Muhajirs in Karachi, in the light of their distinctive peculiarities and concreteness.

DIFFERENT VIEWS

The authors take different disciplinary views of the problem of communal and ethnic riots and urban violence, and attempt their own specialised understanding of the phenomenon in terms of their respective disciplines — psychology, history, law, anthropology, economics, politics and sociology. All ask and variously answer their own particular questions about the human propensity to contend consciously in a violent way. And in the process, some new "facts" emerge, though in several places, one treads familiar country trading in concepts, worn smooth and slippery with much use — social action, communalism, secularism, "otherness", etc.

SEVERAL FACETS OF THE CULT OF VIOLENCE

The sub–title to this work — "Communities, Riots and Survivors in South Asia" — is certainly a short–hand hoarding over a very extensive subject. And this reviewer is rather carried away by the contributors' omnibus approach to the cult of violence, *i.e.* the sheer scope and scale of what the authors have set out to describe and explain — the dimensions assumed by ethnic, caste and communal violence when these crystallize in urban riots, as well as the forms of social science valuations about these; the political, economic, and cultural dimensions of ethnic conflict and the role of the cultural elite, the nature of the capitalist economy, the colonial impact and its role in fomenting violence, and the role of the state in relation to ethnic problems; the earlier riots in the nineteenth century pertaining to Buddhist–Christian conflicts in Sri Lanka, and Hindu–Muslim conflict in India; riots in pre–independence days (caused mostly by local issues) and mass riots in post–independent India (caused largely by political, communal–ideological and economic issues); and riots in recent times arising out of heinous, malafide political interests in manipulating people, circumstances and situations combined with ruthlessness and a casual acceptance of violence as a tool disregarding completely the value of life.

SURVIVORS

There is also a section dealing with the experiences of various survivors, their emotional states and the processes or strategies by which they eventually reconcile with or gradually reconstruct their shattered worlds.

Finally, notwithstanding that there are several instances in this volume where the parameters are far from clear and also that in touring the horizon, the authors often tend to neglect the sort of empirically precise performance that a more circumscribed study might permit, this work presents a unique perspective on urban violence. And indeed redresses a radical imbalance in our usually flawed academic understanding of violence due to the typical paradigmatically rigid approaches of the normalizing sciences which fail to register the "muted violence that seeps into the everyday life of ordinary people".

Research scholar, Udayan Majumdar is also our Editorial Associate at Calcutta.

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Gyanendra Pandey : THE CONSTRUCTION OF COMMUNALISM IN COLONIAL NORTH INDIA—*Oxford University Press, New Delhi*

Tarlok Singh : SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH AND PROBLEM OF POVERTY —*Concept Publishing Co, New Delhi .*

Yashoda Bhatt : ALDOUS HUXLEY AND GEORGE ORWELL—*Sterling Publishers (Pvt. Ltd.) New Delhi*

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As We Remember Them !

Ravindra Kumar
SARDAR VALLABHBHAI PATEL & COMRADE MAO TSE TUNG
(A Comparative Study in the Context of Peasantry)
(एक तुलनात्मक अध्ययन किसान वर्ग के संदर्भ में)
Rajeev Prakashan Mandir, Muzaffar Nagar, pp. 124, Rs. 110/-

Review by Jai Narain

Nowhere has the multi-dimensional process of political, economic and socio-cultural transformation unfolded itself on such a vast scale and in so fascinating a manner as in India and China. By their ideas and actions, Sardar Patel and Mao Tse-Tung both played a dominant role and influenced the course of this unfolding 'Asian Drama'.

The two alternative models of social transformation progressively developed by these two great Asian leaders represent certain ideological perspectives and tools of social engineering peculiarly related to the given historical and socio-political situations in India and China; and it is on the question of the efficacy or otherwise of these two alternative models in the context of the developing societies that the ideological battle in the 'Third World' is being fought.

In this post-doctoral research project, Dr. Ravindra Kumar has done an interesting comparative study of Sardar Patel and Comrade Mao Tse-Tung in the context of peasantry. Both were peasants by birth, and had to face a number of hardships at the beginning of their careers. But they exhibited many qualities of head and heart, and showed remarkable firmness and a high degree of unmistakable leadership.

Sardar Patel infused a spirit of stubborn resistance into the meek peasantry of Bardoli to such a degree that they bore with unique courage, fortitude and determination all sorts of hardship, coercion and repression to which they were exposed by the iron-clad machinery of the British Government.

Similarly, in the China of Mao's birth (in 1893) disasters were normal; floods, droughts and resultant famines were frequent, expected and regarded as inevitable. A famine factor was built into China's death rate: if you were a peasant, famine was one of the things you might expect to die of as likely as of sickness or old age. The peasants were also exploited by the corrupt officials, war-lords and other ruling elites. With such disasters and injustices forming part of their normal pattern of life, it is hardly surprising that the traditional Chinese greeting was not, "How are you?", but "Have you eaten?"

Mao's thinking, and the appeal of Mao's thinking to the Chinese peasants was born out of this life grounded in poverty and suffering; and his life shows a part of the Chinese people's long battle to throw off those chains of poverty and exploitation, and to aspire for a better order of things.

For a variety of reasons, it is difficult to estimate accurately the impact of a leader or an ideology on the transformation of society. It is virtually impossible to find out what would have happened in the absence of a particular leader or ideology, in a given situation. Conceivably, the peasants of both India and China would have witnessed the rapid transformation, even if neither Sardar nor Mao was ever born, although their leadership and ideological approaches did undoubtedly impart some specific novel contents to the process of change.

An additional difficulty in comparing the roles played by Sardar and Mao in the context of peasantry is the early death of Sardar soon after independence, while Mao was able to lead and govern China for a number of years. He could have a more lasting and deep imprint of his personality and ideology on the affairs of China. This difficulty is further compounded by the fact that Sardar Patel had to play second fiddle, first to Mahatma Gandhi and then to Jawaharlal Nehru after independence. But his second place was as good as first.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, the young political scientist, Dr. Ravindra Kumar has done a yeoman's service to the people in general and intellectuals in particular in bringing the two leaders of diverse ideologies together under one book. This enterprise is certainly a valuable addition to the literature on this subject, (and is also welcome being in Hindi).

Dr. Jai Narain is in the Faculty of the Deptt. of Gandhian Studies, Punjab University, Chandigarh.

REMEMBERING PATEL

Ravindra Kumar (Ed.) : SARDAR VALLABBHAI PATEL—A Recollection

Atlantic Publishers & Distributors, Daryaganj, New Delhi (1989).

Short Comment by H.P. Singh

Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel lived through his life always keeping the national interest in the forefront. In all his thoughts, words and deeds, there was the passion for India's welfare and progress, and he was determined to raise the level of the common man, specially the rural folk. It was with this dominant feeling and resolve that Sardar Patel worked, and had then been able to secure the country from the dangers of separatism, terrorism, communalism, regionalism and, last but not the least, instability.

From such a point of view, the book edited by Dr. Ravindra Kumar has a special value. The importance of this book is greatly hightened by the various articles of eminent persons like Shri Morarji Desai, Prof. N.G. Ranga, (Late) Shri H.N. Bahuguna, Shri S.Nijalingapa, (Late) Shri D.P. Mishra, (Late) Shri Gokulbhai Bhatt, Shri Hitendra Desai, Prof. T.B. Mukherji, Shri M.B. Saha, Shri Harivadan Thakore, (Late) Shri R.S. Vyas, Shri Jagat Ram Dave, Shri Uttam Chand Shah, Dr. B.L. Shailesh and (Late) Shri S.L. Banker etc., collected for this purpose by the editor.

This book, touching upon various facets of the Sardar's great personality and his lifetime, can be a great source of ideas in solving the problems confronting the country at the present time. The editor has rendered valuable service by incorporating in this book significant contributions by the associates of Sardar Patel and well-known freedom fighters.

Dr. H.P. Singh is Head of the Deptt. of Political Science, Nanak Chand College, Meerut.

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LEADING A PARTY TO POWER & A NATION TO ITS DESTINY

Ravindra Kumar (Ch. Editor)

SELECTED WORKS OF MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD

(Vol. I (1936-42) pp. 16 + 313; Rs. 300/- (1991)
Vol. II (1943-46) pp. 16 + 266; Rs. 275/- (1991)

Atlantic Publishers & Distributors, New Delhi

Review by H. P. Singh

In Indian politics and the struggle for freedom, the period from 1936 to 1946 was of great significance, especially in the context of national unity, secularism and the preservation of cultural heritage of India. During the period, while the roles of Gandhi, Patel and Nehru and scores of others in the national movement or those outside the pale of that movement cannot be ignored, there was in the person of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad a strong and key personality whose contributions cannot be 'isolated' from the cycle of happenings. At times, especially at critical junctures, Maulana Azad comes before us as a unique representative of the whole of India, in whom the urge and spirit of the entire people belonging to different ethnic groups or religions, and of varied status and various regions, seem well-assimilated and reflected.

Maulana Azad enjoyed full confidence of Mahatma Gandhi and a fruitful cooperation of Jawaharlal Nehru. His relations with Patel were equally cordial and full of mutual regard. This contributed a great deal to the emergence of his personality on the national and even the international scene. He was the spokesman of nationalist India as opposed to some communal spokesmen. Keeping in view the demands and challenges of national unity, secularism, cultural heritage and fraternity, the learned Maulana sacrificed everything for the national struggle. In this manner, slowly and gradually, he shaped to be a key figure, almost the third most important 'national' personality during a critical phase of the post – 1942 and pre-independence negotiations for transfer of power.

It is a matter of great satisfaction (and honour) for me to present a critical appraisal of the first two volumes covering the periods (1936-1942) and (1943-1946) out of the 14 volumes of the series—'*Selected Works of Maulana Azad* (1936-1958) compiled and edited by Dr. Ravindra Kumar.

A LIVING SYMBOL OF THE ERA

One feels so humble before Azad's historic personality, who was then a living symbol of the age–old composite culture of India, and one of the most learned Muslim scholars of his time, not only in the sub-continent, but recognised as such by theologians and scholars alike, all over the then resurgent muslim world. It was with such a noble background of religious learning and wisdom of a deep-rooted culture that he was called upon to play a pivotal role during a critical period of modern Indian history.

VOLUME– I

The first volume contains 154 important documents. These include, first and foremost, Azad's correspondence with Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Acharya J.B. Kriplani, Mr. Mohammed Ali Jinnah, Rajaji and the then Viceroy of India and many other British officers, besides his correspondence with many other people. Maulana's statements and speeches, as well as the circulars and resolutions passed by All Indian Congress Committee under his guidance also shed some fresh light on the whole cycle of events unfolding during this period. What is important is that Maulana's 'national' and 'internationl' outlook comes before us in such a manner that it becomes evident that he was not only fully aware of the national problems, but was also quite confident of finding out a satisfactory solution to them. For example, in the documents no. II to V, or VII - XIII and XXVI of the first volume, he has given very valuable suggestions for solving some 'party' problems. Again, from his letter of 10th April, 1942, to Sir Stafford Cripps, his belief is clear that people belonging to various classes or communities could / would look after their interests and welfare, and could not allow the British Government to interfere in this matter.

INDIAN DESTINY

His speech at the historic AICC session on August 8, 1942, presents a new aspect of his personality, with ample clues of his 'international' awareness. In that speech, he clearly advocated the concept and cause of democracy, while dwelling upon the political struggle of the U.S.S.R., China and many other countries, and pleading for the advent of democracy in India.

Maulana made it very clear that India could not escape from the burden of its duty, and in order to discharge its duty, it would have to keep its unity intact. "Along with the spirit of secularism, we have to preserve the fundamental spirit of our thousands of years old culture, and at the same time to keep pace with others in the comity of Nations. But for this, it would be necessary to acquire independence". That was his refrain, which holds true even today.

This volume contains a complete documentation of the Muslim League's Lahore Resolution, its call for Deliverance Day, the Khare Episode of Central Province (Madhya Pradesh) the proposals of Cripps Mission, the Delhi Dialogues and the support extended by the Madras Assembly to Cripps proposals, besides the text of charges made against Maulana Azad and the judge's decision given at the time of Maulana's arrest on 18th January 1940, in Allahabad.

Document No. 152 shows that Maulana was, in a sense, a revolutionary.

This volume touches upon historic events which have become parts of our living memory and serve as beacons for those who work for peace and prosperity, fraternity and secularism, unity and progress and for the preservation of Indian cultural heritage.

The compilation demonstrates the capability and diligence of the editor. But whatever literature he has given in English translation from other languages, especially from Urdu, should have been better relegated to the appendices. The

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AS WE REMEMBER THEM !

basic source of the material should, however, have been given along with the documents, for that enhances the reliability and validity of the document in question. On the whole, this effort is an important step towards the promotion of the feelings of secularism, and it presents the relevance of Maulana in solving some of the problems of the nation today.

VOLUME– II (1943-1946)

During the period from 1943 to 1946, the country came closer to the threshold of independence. However, the British rulers were bent upon dividing the country, while the forces which endangered the unity of the country were raising their heads.

Maulana Azad was then the President of the Indian National Congress. The country underwent the upheavals of the 1942 Quit India Movement and other various political initiatives or developments like the Wavell Plan, the Cabinet Mission, the Shimla Conference, the formation of the Interim Government and Constitution Committee on the political scene. Also, it was on the verge of falling a victim to the forces acting for partition and communal riots on an unprecedent scale. The Maulana stood firm and unshaken for the cause of the national and cultural unity of the country, and for providing both the Hindus and the Muslims an opportunity to move on the path of mutual trust, harmony and future progress.

His correspondence, speeches and statements and Congress circulars during this period reveal that the Maulana was worried about the unity of purpose among people belonging to various castes and creeds falling apart. In document 104 of this volume, Maulana Azad wrote to Lord Wavell in clear terms : "My Committee are not prepared to accept any proposal; indeed, as we have stated respeatedly, we are opposed to 'parity' in any step or form". (He was referring to 'parity' demanded by the Muslim League and advocated by a strong section of British rulers)

CONGRESS, QUIT INDIA & PARTY UNITY

There are documents appended to the volume[correspondence between Mahatma Gandhi and Maulana Azad on one hand and the Viceroy's rejoinders] about the role and intentions of the Congress in the 1942 movement. A careful reference to these papers would reveal that it was not the intention or design of the Congress High Command to plunge a restive nation into the turmoil and tumult which followed the arrest of the Congress leaders after the historic call of "Do or Die" in August 1942.

Another feature of the *Selected Works* (Volume II) lies in the fact that as Congress President, Maulana tried to maintain the unity of the Congress at every cost. The editor has rendered a service to the nation and to the historians by adding to this volume various fresh or forgotten pieces of information. Perhaps only a few people are in the know of the fact that Maulana Azad did not accept any "injustice" being done by the British, under the Wavell Plan, to the Sikhs and Hindus of the Frontier Province and the Punjab, and to the Hindu of Assam. He compelled the Viceroy and the Secretary of State for India and other British officers concerned to change their attitude.

A DEMOCRATIC & SECULAR PERSON

The documents numbering 104, 105, 106, III-116 of this volume present the real democratic and secular personality of Maulana Azad. He opposed the British policy of making "the scheduled castes as a "separate" entity, distinct from the rest of Hindus. As a result of his pleas in the Shimla Conference, the Sikhs got representation, as is clear from the invitation sent to Master Tara Singh on 9-7-1945 *(Doc. 9)*. This document clearly states : "Nobody should regard others as inferior to him, should not terrify the others, nor should (one) create any hinderance in the progress of the other people".

Another notable feature of this volume is that it contains some of the correspondence of Maulana Azad with Sardar Patel and with other leaders on the eve of and in connection with the then impending General Election. These letters, 40 in number, bear historic testimony that despite some differences in their ideas and approach to local issues or candidates, Maulana Azad and Sardar Patel joined hands and worked for the unity and organization of the Congress and thereby for the welfare of the country. If there were any differences between them in reality, they kept them aside and worked together for their common cause. In one or two instances, the Iron Man of the organisation had his way despite the reservations expressed by the Congress President.

The second volume is as important as the first. The volume supports the views of H.J. Alexander about the Maulana " . . . The present President of Indian National Congress, Maulana Azad, who is a true and orthodox Muslim, with his many Hindu and Muslim friends, has been making efforts to scrape differences between the two major communities (Hindu and Muslim) of his country. His aim is to show that the Congress never wanted, as most of the people believe, majority, . . . has got all its power".

Dr. H.P. Singh is Head of Deptt. of Political Science, Nanak Chand College, Meerut (U.P.)

BOOKS RECEIVED

B.N. Mishra : A MAHABHARAT DICTIONARY —*(Pgs. 83, Rs. 100 (Hbk.), (Fbk.) Rs. 80.*

Kalidas Nag : MEMORIES —*Pgs. 183, Rs. 200 (Hbk.), (Fbk.) Rs. 100.*

K. V. Suryanaraya : OLD MYTH & NEW MYTH LETTERS FROM MULK RAJ ANAND TO K.V. MURTI—*Pg. -85, Rs. 150 (Hbk), (Fbk) Rs. 100.*

R. Raj Rao : TEN INDIAN WRITERS IN INTERVIEW—*Pgs. 106, Rs. 100 (Hbk.), (Fbk.) Rs. 80.*

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JAWAHARLAL NEHRU (1889-1964)

As An English Prose Writer

by O.P. Malhotra

A study of Jawaharlal Nehru as a writer also involves a study of the man, and of modern India awakening from the stupor of centuries and taking the first firm steps in the direction of the future. One has to understand the man, before evaluating the writer.

When we approach his *Glimpses of World History*, his *Autobiography* and *The Discovery of India* and his *Speeches*, we cannot escape for long the magic or the facination of his personality as a writer and a speaker. His *"Letters from a Father to Daughter"* give in simple language a brief account of the early days of the world. They contain all the epistolary harvest of his early prison years. They present the creation of an unconscious artist in the medium of words. One is astonished by the breadth and catholicity of his reading and his sympathies, his easy charming prose, his candour and his humanity.

The Rationalist-Humanist, Dreamer-Artist

The writings of Nehru reveal his urbanity and insinuating humanity. The rationlist and humanist in him is shown striving in his quest for certainty. The dreamer and idealist, the humanist and artist in words, had the purity of his mind and flamelike patriotism. He had humanity and integrity and humility enough to write. Humour never failed him, and with art and irony were ready in the armoury, though used very sparingly. He drew his self-portrait with a matchless candour and courage. His topical writing is touched by his humanity and glows with the incandescance of art. We go to his books to know Jawaharlal Nehru and watch the leaps of his agile intellect alongwith following the sinuous movements of his singular sensibility. The attractive individual style of his writings breathes the life-giving air of culture, and highly shimmers with a steady glow.

A Prophet of Modernity & Votary of Science

The writer in Nehru was a prophet of modernity,a votary of science and an admirer of the "Jet" Age. The themes of his writing were India, India and the world, Humanity's trials and defeats and hopes and achievements.

His prose is a just reflection of the man ---- sincere and idealistic, urbane and cultured, vigorous yet graceful--- a man endowed with a clean and sharp mind, strongly emotional, a love for beauty and a keen cosmic sense. It has a sure feeling for the apt word and the incisive phrase which gives his style a remarkable trenchancy of expression. Nehru's prose is thus eminently 'prose of the Centre'.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY :

A Discovery of Nehru and of India

Nehru's *Autobiography* is a searching piece of self-analysis and offers a vivid panorama of the Gandhian Age. It has employed words which do not merely suffice, but will definitely endure. It has gone into more than a dozen editions, and has been translated into thirty languages. It is one of the outstanding prose works in the annals of Indian writings in English. Written at the age of forty-five, it is a literary expression of Nehru at the height of his powers. It presents an unforgettable picture of Nehru the man and his milieu. This exactly makes it a successful autobiography.

The book is essentially both a 'discovery' of Nehru and a 'discovery' of the awakening of India between the two World Wars.

It is a measure of the artistic success of Nehru's *Autobiography* that almost all the salient features of his complex personality stand revealed in it, almost every quality of his head, heart and soul. It strikes most forcefully his transparent sincerity, his objectivity and sense of fair play and his capacity for unflinching self-analysis. It also depicts his shrewd understanding of human nature as well as stylistic exellence. Thus the book undoubtably ranks among the major autobiographies in modern world literature, and is ranked amongst the great documents of all ages.

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Dr. O.P. Malhotra is Reader, Deptt. of English, S.A. Jain College, Ambala City.

NEHRU : HIS PROSE WAS POETRY

An Appraisal by Shiv K. Kumar

In a short piece published in the *'Hindu'* Madras (17th Nov.) , Prof. Shiv Kumar, himself a leading poet and critic, has hailed Nehru as a poet. He feels that destiny and circumstances had driven Nehru into politics, though he really belonged to the kingdom of poetry. He not only felt at home in the company of poets, his own writings too are embellished with quotes from English poets of every age and tone, from Shakespeare to Eliot; and, of course, his favourite was Robert Frost, a stanza from whose poem seemed to goad him on —"the woods are lovely, dark and deep,

but I have promises to keep,

And miles to go before I sleep,

And miles to go before I sleep."

Nehru was indeed a child of nature, a romantic at heart and sensitive to the soul. Clouds, hills, rivers, birds, trees and other wonderful creations of nature were enough to rouse the poet in him (as much as sights of poverty, hunger, injustice and inhumanity would bestir his conscience, and even his anger!). His fertile mind led him to think and feel in terms of colourful images and poetic symbols. Or, to make his point, he would refer to characters from some plays. In his *'Discovery of India'*, he wrote: 'like Chitra in Tagore's plays, Kamala seems to say to me;"I am Chitra".'

To him, Ganga was a symbol of India's age–old culture and civilization. This is how he has described her in his "Will and Testament"—'Smiling and dancing in the morning sunlight, and dark and gloomy and full of mystery as the evening shadows fall——broad bossomed almost as the sea". It is clear from this passage that he wrote verse in prose, writes Dr. Shiv Kumar.

In fact, if one breaks some such lines of Nehru's prose without twisting, adding or eliminating a single word, many a passage would read like a stanza. As for example, Shiv Kumar has given the following

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excerpt from Nehru's '*Autobiography*' :

"The night full of strange noises,
The convicts overseers shouting,
To each other in varying keys...
They sounded like the moaning,
Of a distant wind,
I was on the edge of a forest ...
And the beasts of the night,
Kept their nocturnal chorus,
Was it my fancy, I wonder ?....."

Lines that follow mention the wonder of the tropical jungle ... with a thousand eyes ... the graceful areca tree, slender, straight and pure...the palm-fringed sea-shore...the emerald green of the island ...the blue sky, sea and the sky... glistening sea-water... and rustling winds... Here is a poet-painter projecting the beauty and majesty of nature with his word images on a colourful canvas.

Since a personal touch of grief or joy can often lend depth and strength to a poetical expression, one of the most moving poetic passages in Nehru's '*Autobiography*' is the one that describes the death of his father. This, according to Shiv Kumar, is in the evocative imagery reminiscent of Tennyson's poem,"The Passing of Arthur"

...In the early morning he left us,
Millions have sorrowed for him,
but what of us, children of his,
flesh of his flesh, And bone of bone.

For Jawaharlal, "Anand Bhavan is "desolate" (like his child... "even as we are... It is lonely and deserted... its spirit seems to have gone... we walk along its verandahs with light steps, lest we disturb...).

No doubt Nehru was gifted with all the gifts of a poet and under appropriate circumstances, could have been moulded into becoming a versatile poet.

[Adapted by Sunita Jakhar, Editorial Assitant I.B.C., from an Appraisal by Prof. Shiv K. Kumar in the Hindu Madras-New Delhi, Nov. 17,1991]

TWO WOMEN WRITERS & THE BATTLE OF THE SEXES

Neena Arora : NAYANTARA SAHGAL AND DORIS LESSING
A FEMINIST STUDY IN COMPARISON

Prestige Books, New Delhi (1991), 129 pp. Rs. 160/-

Review by Jaiwanti Dimri

The book '*Nayantara Sahgal and Doris Lessing*' by Neena Arora is a comparative study of two women writers in English who outwardly and apparently have little in common with each other. They belong to different countries and different social and cultural backgrounds. Yet, most interestingly, "one finds in their works continuity and similarity by which both imagine and convey the battle of the sexes"... to quote the line from the preface of the book.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION FROM A FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE

The writer has selected a few representative works of Nayantara Sahgal and Doris Lessing and interpreted them from the feminist perspective. Accepting the fact that both the writers began writing before the feminist movement was launched in the sixties, the author undertakes to prove the involvement of both of them with the major issues of the feminist movement.

The book is divided into six chapters. The first chapter, namely "Feminism", contains a comprehensive account of the feminist movement in India and abroad. The second chapter : "Woman Made Woman" discusses the works of Nayantara Sahgal and Doris Lessing in the light of the feminists' convictions for this purpose. Sahgal's '*This Time of Morning*' and '*A Situation in Delhi*' and Lessing's '*Martha Quest*' and '*The Grass is Singing*' are selected for discussion.

CHAOTIC EXPERIENCES

'Woman as Wife' is the title of the third chapter highlighting the oppression and suffereings of Indian and English women in marriage, in their respective societies. The chief women protagonists from Lessing's '*A Proper Marriage*', '*The Golden Notebook*' and '*A Ripple from the Storm*' and Sahgal's '*Storm in Chandigrh*', '*The Day in Shadow*', '*This 'Time of Morning* and *Rich Like Us* are revealed in their role of wives. For the majority of them, marriage turns out to be a chaotic experience resulting in a divorce. The plight and predicament of the divorced women can very well be seen in Sahgal's '*The Day in Shadow*', '*Storm in Chandigarh*' and Lessing's '*A Proper Marriage*' and '*The Golden Notebook*'.

THE QUESTION MARK

In the fifth chapter of the book, 'Free Woman?' the interrogative mark implies the irony. The writer concludes by identifying the vision of both the novelists about a world built on equality of sexes.

This book is based on Neena Arora's doctoral dissertation. She began with a balanced discussion of feminism in India and abroad, but in the consecutive chapters, the balance gets swayed in favour of feminism abroad. An interpretation of Nayantara Sahgal's novels, in particular from Indian standards of feminism, would have been more enlightening. Nevertheless the book is a valuable addition to the previous comparative studies of women writers.

Dr. (Miss) Jaiwanti Dimri teaches in the Deptt. of English, H.P.U. Evening College, Shimla.

BOOKS RECEIVED

P.C. Chatterji : BROADCASTING IN INDIA —*(Second Edition) Sterling Puublishers (Pvt.) Ltd., New Delhi*

P.C. Mathur & R.K. Gurjar (Eds.) : WATER & LAND MANAGEMENT IN ARID ECOLOGY —*Rawat Pubvlicztions, Jaipur.*

Bina Saxena : THE BLOOD OF ARYAMAN (3 volumes)—
Vol-1, Pg. -156, Rs. (Hbk) 150, (Fbk) Rs. 120.
Vol-2, Pg. -311, Rs. (Hbk) 150, (Fbk) Rs. 120.
Vol-3, Pg. -478, Rs. (Hbk) 150, (Fbk) Rs. 120.

J.P. Singh : RELEASE (novel) —*Pgs. 197, Rs. 200 (Hbk.), (Fbk.) Rs. 150*

WRITERS WORKSHOP, Calcutta

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SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL

WRITERS' WORKSHOP : THE BIG STORY OF A SMALL VENTURE

by Sachidanand Mohanty

Why should Sheaffer Inc., Rhode Island, U.S.A., one of the largest manufacturers of calligraphy products, support literary awards of a small publishing house in far away Calcutta?

The question certainly is as fascinating as the history of *The Writers' Workshop* or its founder, Professor P. Lal. Over a period spanning thirty five years, Lal has, as a one–man institution, carved out for himself and his *Workshop*, a unique position in the Indian literary and publishing world.

The eagerness of Sheaffer to sponsor awards in the form of five 23k gold electroplate fountain pens, one each for the best book in five categories, poetry, drama, fiction, literary criticism and belles lettres, is just one more instance, Lal believes, why good work has never suffered due to lack of money or patronage. "Such work has to be genuine and selfless," he continues. It is this firm faith in the worthwhileness of creative effort that has always guided Lal. In a publishing world that is shockingly unprofessional and grossly mercenary, the sustained work of the *Writers' Workshop* has forced attention upon the sceptics, if only by its clear success over a period of time.

THIS IS THE WORKSHOP...

Finding *Writers' Workshop* in Calcutta's sprawling Lake Gardens poses surprisingly no problem. Everybody seems to know "the Professor." I ring the bell and am ushered upstairs to Lal's bed–cum–study. Lal sits in a corner amidst a vast pile of books, wrapping paper, scissors, thread, gum bottles and above all, a collection of strikingly attractive calligraphy pens.

"This is the *Workshop*," explains Lal. "I do practically everything by myself, starting from correspondence to making neat parcels." Any one who has worked with the *WW* knows that it is not an empty boast. All correspondence with the *Workshop*, as many must have discovered, is invariably in Lal's own hand-writing. Letters are promptly answered, schedules scrupulously kept.

"I have just recovered from near death," Lall explains his pulled down look. In 1989, while attending the "Harbour Front Poetry Reading Series" in Canada, Lal was suddenly taken ill. The recovery, he feels, was miraculous. "I have had so many bottles of blood transfusion that I am not sure I am still a Hindu," he remarks with a laugh. The experience has weakened him, but certainly not his effort. A book based on this near–death experience is going to see day light soon. *(It has appeared since, and has been introduced to IBC readers by Dr. Prema Nandkumar–Ed.)*

THE REASON WHY & THE GROUP

I ask P. Lal about the beginning. "The reason I went into publishing is simple," he says, "no body was around in 1958 to publish me. So, I published myself. Half–a–dozen others—friends—also found this expedient, attractive. So we formed a group, a nice consanguineous coterie. We wrote prefaces to each other's books, pointing out excellences and performed similar familial kindness in other ways as well. We believed with Helen Gardner that criticism should flash the torch, not wield the sceptre. We gave unto ourselves a name—*Writers'Workshop*–and adopted unto ourselves, a detailed 1000 word "constitution," drafted by our precisest minded member, Deb Kumar Das." Apart from Das, there were seven others, Sasthibrata, Anita Desai, William Hill, P. Lal, (as the Secretary) Jai Ratan, Pradip Sen and Kewlian Sio.

The objective of the *WW* has always centred around the pivotal role that English language can and ought to be playing creatively in India. English, it believes, "has proved its ability as a language to play a creative role in Indian litereature. The task the *Workshop* has set for itself is that of defining and substantiating this role by discussion and diffusion of creative writing from India and other parts of the world. Its publishing focusses on English creative and trans–creative works by Indians or such work as deals with or is inspired by or has relevance for Indian life and culture."

A UNIQUE ACHIEVEMENT & AN IMPRESSIVE RECORD

Today, the *WW* has 800 titles *(perhaps many more–Ed.)* on its list, mostly poetry, drama, fiction and criticism by mostly young and unknown Indian authors. Operating on a modest scale with the help of a small band of devoted workers, with the total machinery including typerfaces costing less than six thousand, using vacant space thoughtfully provided by friends as godown and storage, the *WW* has been able to keep down costs to a minimum, roughly one fifth the costs of a linotype press. The books are invariably hand–set and printed on an Indian made hand–operated machine by Sanjoy Chakroborty. They are also gold embossed, hand–stitched, hand–pasted and hand–bound by Tulamiah Mohiudeen in handloom saree cloth.

What are the *Workshops'* criteria for selection, I ask Lal. "It has three. One, a writer sends in material that's so impossibly good that it's few years ahead of its time—and there are very few commercial publishers who would think of inversting in such first rate post–dated creativity. Two, the work shows promise and the writer might stop writing altogether if not discreetly encouraged through publishig. Three, the manuscripts appeal to my taste, such as it is, and I enjoy bringing out stuff that I like; it's like introducing a talented friend to strangers, though some may well wonder where the talent lies. To each his taste. A good motto to go by is : Publish the

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moderns and read the ancients. Trust ruthless time!"

THE DEBUT OF SEVERAL WRITERS

The record of the *WW* has clearly been impressive. Several writers who went on to bag important literary awards, made their debut here. The *Workshop* published Nissim Ezekiel's. *The Unfinished Man* in 1960 and *The Exact Name* in 1965. Ezekiel went on to claim the Sahitya Akademi award in 1984. Similarly, none could have imagined Jayanta Mahapatra for the same award in 1981, when ten years before in 1971, his book of poems *Svayamvara* was published. Or that, *Time* would feature Kamala Das in December 27, 1975, when *The Descendants* of hers appeared in the *WW* in 1967. Or that Vikram Seth whose collection of poems *Mappings* was brought out by *WW* in 1985 would be honoured by the Sahitya Akademi for his *Golden Gate* three years later.

The *Workshop* also takes pride in being the first publishers of Ruskin Bond (in India), Asif Currimbhoy, Keki Daruwalla, Shashi Deshpande, Padma Hejmadi, Shiv K. Kumar, David McCutchion, Pritish Nandy, A.K. Ramanujan, Jai Ratan, Jug Suraya and many others who have subsequently distinguished themselves in large commercial houses.

The *Workshop* has received many coveted awards for its excellent production too. It won the first prize in the National Printing and Binding Awards (1970) for William Hull's *Vision of Handy Hopper* (Book 2) and for Jai Nimbkar's *The Lotus Leaves*.

BEYOND A TRADE : REVIEWS & RENDEVOUS

The activites of the *WW* are many and go beyond publishing new titles. A bi-monthly journal *Miscellany* serves as a forum for critical reviews. Sunday morning sessions are devoted to informal readings or discussion by scholars and creative writers. Over the years, the reputation of the *Workshop* has brought many distinguished writers to Lake Gardens : Mulk Raj Anand, Pearl S. Buck, Nirad C. Chaudhury, Paul Engle, Allen Ginsberg, Gunter Grass, Geoffry Hill, Christopher Isherwood, William Radice, R.K. Narayan, Raja Rao, Santha Rama Rao, Peter Brook, Jean Claude Carriere, Karan Singh and many more.

FUNDING FOR THE PROJECT

How does P. Lal keep going ? After all, even poets and small publishers need money. A modest subsidy from a writer may be asked for, but it may not offset the cost of production of a book, especially when several editions must remain unsold. After all, few people buy books and fewer still, the work of a totally unknown authour. Lal is quick to point out that a venture such as his is not a commercial proposition.

Nevertheless, he has never relied on government support, keeping the *WW* scrupulously apolitical. He does not blame the commercial houses either. "They are primarily interested in money and so they must have their pot boilers," he shrugs. "There is certainly space both for the banyan tree as well as the grass."

"Every year," he continues, "I get invited to lecture at North American Universities. Most of the money that I earn there goes into my books." Assignments from abroad also help. As if to prove his point, Lal pulls out an envelope and hands over a letter to me. A prestigious international agency wants him to make an assessment of creative writing in India in the last five years. The reward for a five hundred word resume : US $ 2,000. "That's good money," Lal adds. "Quality work is always recognized here and abroad, and international foundations prefer dealing with non-governmental organisations of repute in the third-world."

PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENTS & RECOGNITION

Lal's own achievements are by no means modest. He is honorary Professor of English at Calcutta University. From 1962, he has lectured widely on Indian Literature to British, American and Australian Universities such as the University of Illinois, Hofstra, Ohio, as well as Albion, Hartwick and Berea College.

Transcreations from the epics and scriptures have been many : *The Dhammapada* (1967), *The Isa Upanishad* (1974), *The Mahabharat* of Vyasa (1980), *The Ramayana* of Valmiki (1981). Current projects include *The Complete Mahabharata* of Vyasa.

Lal is also the Director of Research and Publication Unit of the M.P. Birla Foundation, publisheres of 30-volume *Encyclopaedia Asiana* and 50-volume series *Classics of the East*.

There has been recognition at the national level too: the prestigious Jawahar lal Nehru Fellowship in 1969-70 as well as Padma Shri in 1970.

Lal attributes much of his success to a happy marriage. A son 31 and a daughter 27 are both in the literary world. His wife, a creative person and designer herself, continues to remain an active partner.

While there has been an occasional criticism that the *WW* has lent its imprint of the flame-ringed Bird Book logo at times, to undeserving titles, it goes to the *Workshop's* credit-it has so far steered clear of major controversies, preferring to turn out works quietly and efficiently. At fifty-eight, *(when this piece was first written-Ed.)* when many may call it a day, Professor Lal and his Workshop have proved yet again that small is *always* beautiful..

Dr. Sachidanand Mohanty of the Deptt. of English ,University of Hyderabad had his interview with Prof. P. Lal and wrote this piece almost 2 years ago.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Kamala Das: THE DESCENDANTS—*(Poems) Pgs. 42, Rs. 60 (Hbk.), (Fbk.) Rs. 40.*

Purna Vikram : ETERNAL REST (Play) — *Pgs. 115, Rs. 120 (Hbk.), (Fbk. Rs. 80.*

P. Lal & Shyamasree Devi : TAGORE'S LAST POEMS—*Pgs. X + 15, Rs. 40 (Hbk.), (Fbk.) Rs. 20.*

M.S. Ramaswami : MODERN TAMIL STORIES(Vol. 1)—*Pgs. 220 Rs. 180(Hbk.), (Fbk.) Rs. 150*

WRITERS WORKSHOP, Calcutta

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A PROTEST & A REJOINDER

A report on the Sahitya Akademi-sponsored FESTIVAL OF LETTERS, 1991, by Prabha Mahajan published in the May 1991 issue of the IBC (Vol. XVI, No. 5) brought us a letter of 'protest' from Ms. Vijaya John Kohli, Deputy Secretary of the Akademi. We reproduce the same below with a 'rejoinder' by Mrs. Mahajan. Since the correspondence has become a 'personalised' interaction, it may not be desirable to extend it any further. However, these columns are always open for clarification or correction of facts and data or neccessary contradictions.

—Eds.

11th/16th October 1991

Dear Sir,

The *Indian Book Chronicle*, one had throught, had a healthy respect for the difference between fact and fiction; this proved not to be the case in the issue *Vol XVI* No, 5 of May 1991, which purports to provide "A Report" by a research scholar at the Centre for Linguistics and English, School of Languages, J.N.U., of the *Festival of Letters, 1991*.

The entire piece reflects poorly not only on her journalistic skills (a forgivable fault) but also on her veracity, which in a research scholar is unpardonable.

To pick up just two cases of fiction (which normally the Sahitya Akademi supports in Literature, but obviously cannot support in this case) she refers to "a woman Deputy Secretary" whose total attempt appears to have been to subvert literary effort; since I am the only woman Deputy Secretary in the Sahitya Akademi, I persume the reference (if the piece is to be taken as a report and not fiction) is to me; and, I can assure the author that my seat during the award-giving proceedings, and the Writers Meet was firmly, and unbudgingly, in the audience section of the hall.

Another example of pure fiction is provided in the paragraph on the role of the Sahitya Akademi. The little drama that she recounts (95 lakhs and all !) as having taken place appears not to have been seen or heard by anybody except her. She ought to remember what normally happens to those who "hear voices" and see visions which others do not. God save research in this country!

If the lady correspondent wishes to make new start by sifting fact from fiction, she is welcome to listen to all the audio-cassete records we have of all the proceedings of the Festival of Letters.

(Vijaya John Kohli)
(Deputy Secretary, Sahitya Akademi)

Reply to the Protest Letter

Since when has the Sahitya Akademi deemed itself to be the single virgin in the 'kotha' of the capital's bureaucracy?

If the deputy secretary calls the figure of Rs. 95 lakhs as fiction, then being a member of the Akademi's fiefdom, why does she not disclose the exact expenditure incurred for the benefit of the general public? No 'drama' has been enacted in the paragraph on the role of Sahitya Akademi. Either the lady must have been snoozing or the relevant audio-cassettes must have been conveniently edited.

The lady's bunglings took place in the afternoon session on Friday, 22nd Feb, when for some reason or the other, the secretary, Shri Indra Nath Choudhary, was not present in the auditorium hall of the India International Centre. If she sat 'unbudgingly' in the earlier proceedings, let me assure the readers, it was less due to the weight of responsibility but more because of the weight of her person.

The Report nowhere mentions about a woman deputy secretary '*whose total attempt appears to have been to subvert literary effort.*' The fiction is hers.

In addition to the Papers read out by the speakers, my article was also based on remarks, asides, comments and views exchanged informally among the participants during the entire Festival lasting for a week. Which reader, excepting the deputy secretary, will be interested in the dreary transcripts of all the audio-cassettes? This obviously speaks for the poor journalistic sense of the letter-writer.

Before questioning my research capability, the lady may like to hone, perhaps, her own public-speaking skills. While introducing the authors on 22nd Feb (afternoon session), her nonchalance and amateurish approach were there for all to see. Worse, she compounded it with her skimpy locution and sloppy manner of delivery.

4 Nov. 1991 *(M. Prabha)*

JADED YUDHISHTHIRA

Poem by Kulwant Singh Gill

Round and round
Like the bedraggled bullock
Plying the Persian Wheel
Thi
Routine-ridden existence
Rolls on
Till
The mind stumbles against
The obstinate inner voice
Raising questions
Awkward, abtuse and absurd
That do the mind confound
For
This poor, bleared mind
Knows not the key
To riddles teasing yet profound
I am a jaded Yudhisthira
Yoked
To the weary dismal-go-round.

Dr. Kulwant Singh Gill is Assoc. Prof. of English in the Deptt. of Journalism, Language & Culture in the Punjab Agriculture University, Ludhiana.

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BAAT CHEET— OF THIS & THAT . . . EDITOR'S BOOK-CHAT

Another Drop In The Gandhian Ocean

'Gandhiana' is a vast ocean of thoughts and ideas, endless, deep and unfathomed. Gandhi's basic concepts or precepts might have been few; but he wrote and even spoke volumes about them. During his life-time, and after his tragic departure from the mortal world, volumes have been published about him, his words and deeds ! Only a few care to read them. And yet, every now and then, more books are added to the stream of Gandhian literature, in all languages.

GANDHIAN STUDIES

There are also several *ashramas* still running on Gandhian lines. Gandhi was a persistent Ashrama-builder, as a means to train and discipline his companions and followers and to have a mobile force of dedicated and disciplined volunteers, his political activists and constructive workers. There are also now several institutes of Gandhian studies, and more are added year after year. Many universities have also opened Centres for Gandhian Studies with support from the UGC and the ICSSR.

Gandhi may not be in the current 'political' fashion, but he has not yet been discarded nor eliminated from the collective mind of India. He is quite alive and popular, especially among the new 'anti-establishment' and 'anti-state' intellectual and academic elite. And yet, there is often a cry that Gandhi has been neglected, ignored and side-tracked and what not.

There is also a repeated accusation that Nehru had usurped the honour or the central place of command which was and should have been due to Gandhi and his 'Gandhian' followers; that Nehru went against the precepts and teachings of Gandhi and later negated him in almost every aspect. There are 'Gandhians', left socialists (Lohia and J. P. camp-followers), *Sarvodaya* workers and even those belonging to more conservative, if not rightist, hues of political and social thought who have again recently begun to swear by Gandhi (Or, have they already jumped off that band wagon ?) who would fight their political, personal and sometimes petty battles against Nehru in the name of Gandhi.

Whatever be the motives of such a tirade, the odd fact remains that, while there are officially patronised institutes and centres of Gandhian studies, there is almost no such institute devoted to the study of the Nehruvian legacy, if one may like to distinguish Nehru from Gandhi in this manner. This, however, is only a diversionery comment.

LEGACY OF GANDHI—WHO WAS HIS HEIR ?

There is another matter which has also unfortunately assumed some significance during recent years. That is about the legacy of Gandhi, or more precisely about his 'true' heir. Who was Gandhi's heir ? Or, his true disciple ?

Questions or doubts in this refrain keep cropping up again and again. More often that not, these are the unspoken doubts and misgivings of a frustrated, disillusioned and disgruntled or defeated lot of intellectuals, social or political workers.

We need to clear some fog surrounding these points. As is well known, and some-what reluctantly (and sadly) acknowledged, Nehru was the nominated or the named '*political*' heir of Gandhi, whatever their mutual differences, personal traits and beliefs. We may also assume, rather acknowledge, that in matters relating to the Congress organisation, Vallabhbhai Patel, the Sardar, had already been functioning as Gandhi's aide, lieutenant, deputy or whatever one may call him, almost from the days of Bardoli Satyagrah, and his supremacy in the Congress High Command was never in doubt, much less ever denied.

There were a few odd denials or defiances, now or then, but these were superbly and successfully ironed out, steam-rollered or plastered over.

Nehru, labelled as an idealist, visionary or 'a dreamer', had little to do or say in the organisational matters until after Patel's death. But hadn't Gandhi advised about the 'dissolution' of the Congress, almost as a parting advice or as his 'will' ? Yet Patel continued as the chief or 'captain' of the Congress – the Iron Man—as long as he lived. None dare challenge his will or deny his eminence !

There was yet another heir of Gandhi, perhaps too long in the wings or away from the lime-light, who was to emerge on the scene in due course—none other than Vinoba Bhave, a silent worker a quiet scholar, and a person devoted to 'constructive work', which was perhaps Gandhi's unique legacy to the nation.

There were several other prominent persons, all disciples of the Mahatma, who were duly alloted their areas of work in the widening spheres of social reform and constructive work, for the uplift of the poor and the downtrodden, several other heirs of Gandhi. We may take them all together under this fold or group of Gandhian social activists, who kept aloof from politics.

The 'trinity' of Patel, Nehru and Vinoba represented, however, the multi-facet aspects of Gandhi's philosophy, his body of faith or creed, and his personality; and those of us who wish to have a feel of Gandhi or take a sip from the endless stream of his thoughts, must learn to 'unify' these three prominent trends, the three different personalities, three traditions and work cultures.

GANDHI'S SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY . . .

This brings us to the book (rather a booklet)

(*Continued*)

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Another Drop In The Gandhian Ocean

which prompted these thoughts in my mind. It is on the *Social Philosophy of Gandhi* by K.S. Bharati, brought out by the Concept Publishing Company.

This is part of a series on Gandhian Studies and Peace Research. The current book is the fifth offering; *Gandhian Model of Development*, *Conflict Resolution through Non-Violence*, *Role of Universities* in two volumes, being the earlier publications.

Naturally, from an established author-editor and an equally established publishing house and as a part of an on-going series, one should have expected a gem of a volume. But in spite of some good and welcome features, the book falls short of such expectations.

... OF CONSTRUCTIVE WORK

The first chapter (of about 7 pages) deals with 'Constructive Work', to define the concept or meaning of constructive work. The second chapter (of about 70 pages) deals with the entire gamut of activities proposed and initiated by Mahatama Gandhi under the overall wide-spread umbrella of constructive work.

Though the author has quoted fairly extensively from Gandhi's writings, the sources of such extractions have not been indicated. This is perhaps a glaring weakness in the whole project. For example, on page 12, he has quoted from Gandhi's writings in 1931 : " . . .My work of social reform or self-purification was in no way less than or subordinate to political work. . . .The work of social reform or self-purification of this nature is a hundred times dearer to me (than) what is called purely political work. . ." We don't know the source or the context of this quotation.

On page 13, Bharati has again quoted Gandhi to list out the following original thirteen items of his constructive programme :—

(1) Communal Unity, (2) Removal of Untouchability, (3) Prohibition, (4) Khadi, (5) Other Village Industries, (6) Village Sanitation, (7) New or Basic Education, (8) Adult Education, (9) Upliftment of Women, (10) Education in Health and Hygeine, (11) Provincial Languages, (12) Propagation of *Rashtra Bhasha* and (13) Promotion of Economic Equality.

A LIFE-LONG SEARCH & A LONG STRUGGLE

It has been rightly pointed out that the content of the Constructive Programme was not conceived in one go. Gandhi took many years to evolve and give concrete and practical shape to his programme of constructive activities before these became the core of his social philosophy. In 1945, five more activities or programmes, *for* special *target* groups, were added to cater to the needs of :—(1) Kisans, (2) Labour, (3) Adivasis, (4) Lepers and (5) Students. And, five additional activities or programmes were added by his followers after Gandhi's demise to give further strength and coverage to the Gandhian movement *viz.* (1) Cow Protection, (2) Nature Cure, (3) *Bhoodan*, (4) *Gram Dan* and (5) *Shanti Sena*. That make a full package of 23 activities under Gandhi's Constructive Programme.

Earlier, even during the days of his struggle in South Africa, Gandhi had put a great premium on constructive work, on the training of his followers or volunteers and in the *Ashram* type of disciplined camp-life in Africa, which experiments were continued and repeated in India both at Sabarmati and Wardha and abroad. Even during the Champaran Satyagraha, his mind and energy turned to the opening of primary schools, along with rural sanitation work.

Gandhi was well aware that this was not (could not be) an exciting work. But he also knew that this would (could) be one practical way to serve the people who needed immediate relief, motivation for self help and restoration of some elements of their self-respect.

TO PREPARE PEOPLE FOR RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT

In 1920, he had initiated a four-fold programme of constructive work with the *Charakha* as its symbol or the main plank. Later, talking to Rajkot workers, he emphasised that such work should continue because, ". . .this will develop the qualities required for non-violents responsible government. . ." Gandhi continued to lay stress on these aspects on many subsequent occasions, *e.g.* in March 1926, in *Young India* or in his pamphlet on constructive programme in mid-December 1941. His address to the Kasturbha Nidhi workers in February 1945 is another such landmark.

One, however, wishes, that K S. Bharati had given more extensive quotes or extracts from these writings, and also from other Gandhian literature like the *Hind Swaraj* or Gandhi's advice through "a Code of Conduct for the Ashram-dwellers."

This long chapter also covers in detail the essential background to the evolution of various activities which were gradually brought under the fold of constructive programme.

By and large, the order of the activities has been maintained as indicated above, though at different times and various stages or phases of the national movement, certain activities assumed greater importance and urgency than the rest.

Naturally, for example, Communal Unity was stressed and strongly advocated as and when communal tensions grew between the Hindus and Muslims, or when at a later stage, the Muslim League came to assume threatening, almost violent, postures. There was a stage when Untouchability became a central

(Continued on next page)

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FAREWELL 1991 . . . !

As the poet has said, "Let us Ring out the old, and Ring in the New !" The end of a year is for all of us, a time to say farewells and to exchange good wishes for the year to come. It is a time to look back, and look sideways, before venturing ahead. We do that whenever we get to any cross-roads, while looking ahead or trying to step forward.

As we look back, it is a matter of relief that India has turned back from the brink of disaster in a topsy turvy world. More of it later !

In the IBC, we have a measure of satisfaction that the journal has survived all the ups and downs and depressions of the year—what with rising costs, the growing indifference by the book trade and the hassles by our local printers. The survival has been possible because of the unflinching and liberal support and patronage of our well-wishers, a growing community of book-lovers and responsive scholars, writers and reviewers. Our grateful thanks to them all ! May their tribe and numbers grow !

A few publishers have stood by the IBC and, at least, continued to favour us with review copies of some of their books. (Though we, and some of our reviewers have failed to keep to reasonable deadlines). But surely, the Indian publishers can and ought to do much more than at present for a youthful but struggling and independent or self-financing journal like the IBC.

In the absence of the trade support and some "official" patronage, we have not been able to add more pages or features to the journal, nor increase its print order. All that would need "commercial" and "viable" resources. Perhaps the time is not ripe for that yet. For that reason we have to make do with smaller printing units. We have also had to defer a proposal to launch a Hindi quarterly of the same type, for which a strong lobby has been growing.

The IBC had moved to Jaipur in April, 1986, to come out with the then pending December 1985 issues of the fortnightly that it was. We have completed six years of nursing a sickly weakling left out in the cold by its founder-fathers. It has been a trying time indeed, trying to catch up with schedules, arranging funds and all other requisities. We have to pay a heavy toll of our limited resources, energies and aspirations. But the venture has been worth-while. It has proved at least that there is a scope of a journal of this kind, and it has a useful role too, in the service of the reading public.

Looking sideways, we have noted that while a much publicised enterprise by a leading chain of newspapers flopped with its first issue from New Delhi, another similar entrant in the South is doing well. Good Luck to our young companion—shall we say fellow-traveller — on a long endless journey towards enlightenment ! We are not competitors; rather we may complement each other's efforts. Each has its own place or role in the academic or professional community of those who are addicted to books or even have a passing general interest in the wonderful world of books.

The IBC editorial team at Jaipur has been under constant strain. More recently, the team has begun to splinter away, with less and less cooperative participation and sharing of burdens. But we have been more than compensated by the willing offer of support from a growing number of editorial associates located in different states, cities and academic centres. Besides, we have always been blessed by the advice, goodwill and concern (loving care, one should say) of scores of benefactors—some well-established masters of the pen and honoured veterans. Their names need not be mentioned; our discerning readers can easily guess their identities How can we thank them ? They are our inspirations, our silent backers, morale-boosters.

Above all, it has been the goodwill and association of many scholars and critics, writers and librarians that has kept the IBC going. We dedicate our efforts to them in the years to come !

It is also surprising that when the chips are down, and there is no hope or sign of immediate relief of financial support—and one is almost tempted to give up—somehow assistance (by way of the much-needed funds) comes in miraculously, from unexpected but friendly quarters, even from outside the book trade and the coterie of men of letters or their fans. These are persons of good faith and goodwill who do not mind to support a good and noble cause. They help with their gifts of charity, and often come to the recue of IBC. The present issue of IBC is a living testimony to that feat—a miracle indeed, that almost after the issue was ready, relief has come from strange and unknown quarters, from men who are not closely connected with the world of books or the book trade as such. We honour their helpful gesture and thank them on behalf of the IBC fraternity.

The IBC does not claim to be anything more than the opening of small windows on the vast horizons of ideas and words of wisdom, of human hopes and dreams. IBC is also an open forum or a two-way channel of communication open between the poets or the writers and the critics or the connoisseurs and readers at large. We intend keeping these windows or rainbow channels open as long as possible.

As we enter the new year, we cherish many hopes and dreams and share them with our patrons. Let us move towards a more literate and intelligent or enlightened society ! Let us nourish the culture of books, the habits of reading and of deep rumination despite the growing costs and flashy onslaughts by the MNC—controlled and manipulated audio-visual media which have entered our study-rooms, drawing rooms and even bed-rooms. Better to read oneself to sleep than being capitivated and bewitched by the blazing lights of the star-spangled idiot box, the video parlour or the salellite T. V. in the sky.

—Editors

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ON INDIAN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Ghanshyam Shah : SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN INDIA—A Review of Literature

Sage Publications, New Delhi (1990) Pp. 222. Rs. 190/.

Review by K. Seshadri

This book aims to review the literature on social movements and does not profess to analyse it.

Hence its scope is very limited and precise. It may also be conceded that all the books and articles on social movements may not have been referred to, since the volume of such literature is almost impossible to handle. Some significant works are likely to have been omitted if not due to any other factor, at least because some publications are not very well-known. Given these limitations, I must say that the author has done a good job of taking up the main points from each of the work under themes that he has chosen to include in his definition of 'social movements', and placing them in a coherent form.

A book of this sort is welcome for its usefulness to those who study movements and would like to know at a glance what has already been covered by scholars. The gaps, therefore, are highlighted. The author has confined himself to very brief personal comments on the analysis of the various authors.

ELITES & THE MASSES

As he rightly comments, political scientists particularly have not given these social movements the importance that they deserve. They were (have been) more concernad with 'elites' and not with 'the masses', who, in the fianl analysis, are the makers of history. Preoccupation with elites starts with Machiavelli, Pareto and Mosca, since to these Italian thinkers, masses do not constitute the power structure. It is only with the entry of Marxists that some attention has been devoted to the masses and their role. Then all the western political scientists picked up the thread; and immediately after the Second World War, this sea change in the academia occurred. This work is a sign of this recognition.

WIDE RANGE & VARIETY OF MOVEMENTS

The author has made the following divisions among the social movements that occurred in India. They are : Peasant movements, Tribal movements, Back-ward Classes movements, Women's movements, Students' movements, Middle Class movements and Industrial Working Class movements. There are certainly many overlaps.

An excellent introduction gives the theoretical frame-work and explains the scope of the study, giving the arguments and counter-arguments of the various scholars on their points of view. As the author concedes, "The most difficult riddle which often baffled me in writing this essay, has been : which studies should be included and which excluded ?"... (I must say that some attempts I myself had made regarding 'mass participation and rural unrest' fell in the second category !)

The concept of what is a 'social movement', itself has been a subject of discussion; and after that the book starts in right earnest to describe and analyse the various writings.

INDIAN PEASANTRY

The chapter on peasant movements, understandably occupies a lot of importance. Much has been written on them, and it is also a blanket term, since agricultural workers and tribals also come within its purview. Many scholars like Irfan Habib, the Aligarh histotian, have argued that agricultural workers are to be included in the category of peasants. This is not very precise since their respective problems are different. The author recognises this distinction.

As far back as 1923, in the Andhra parts of a composite Madras Presidency, an agricultural labourers' organisation was formed; and subsequently such organisations grew in Punjab and Bengal and U.P. in 1926–27. Well, this is by the way !

Another point is whether the Indian peasantry were passive due to tradition and caste that had a death-like grip over them or whether that was not relevant to their struggles. Barrington Moore and Eric Stokes support the former proposition, while Kathleen Gough and others think that Indian peasant was as revolutionary as the Chinese peasant. Like Sir Roger de Coverly, the author says that much might be said on both sides ! To club all the revolts in the times of Aurangazeb as peasant struggles is to carry the materilist interpretation rather too far.

INDUSTRIAL WORKERS & SOCIAL SCIENTISTS

The point that industrial workers' movements and the trade unions have not attracted the political scientists is well taken. They have 'kept this field almost untouched' (*p. 183*). So did the charmed circle of academics, the economists. Of late, some attention is being given to them by students of political science who, for want of a subject for research, have started exploring this field.

(Contd.)

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Writings on Indian Social Movements *(Contd.)*

LUMPENISM & POPULISM

Both student politics and industrial workers politics must be studied with discernment, since in both these movements, particularly, the play of lumpen elements is very significant.

The Dalit movement is of recent origin and as, the author says, it has been highly visible in Maharashtra. The backward communities also are coming to the fore-front with the help of a lot of lumpenism and populism that their patron saint, Ram Manohar Lohia, stirred up, with his own brand of socialism, and followed by his modern-day devotees like one of our ex-prime ministers.

One has to make the distinction clear from what constitutes a forward movement and what constitutes a regressive one. These exercises are rather too detailed for the present book under review. That these backward classes use the scheduled castes to support them in their fight against the forward communities and after that, they themselves begin to exploit and treat them brutally, is well-pointed out from a quotation from Trilok Nath's work (*p. 109*). (I have also mentioned about this in my work "*Rural Unrest in India*"–1983. I am particularly mentioning this in view of the Mandal Commission agitation in which the Scheduled Castes have been dragooned.)

INADEQUATE STUDIES ON WOMEN AND SOME OTHER WORKING GROUPS

Work on Women and their problems, apart from the common problems which are class-oriented or caste-oriented, have not been very significant. Now it is picking up with emphasis on sex aspect. Women as 'women', irrespective of other things, have their own problems.

As the author says in his concluding chapter, studies on other types of working classes like the fisherfolk, forest-folk, auxiliary workers etc.have been inadequate. Even regionally speaking, some areas show a greater salience than others.

This work has shown the bright points as well as the dark ones in the research work in Social movements. This purpose it has fulfilled, without tears and boredom. It has earned a place in the general reference works that earnest scholars have to consult before they launch on their enterprise.

In this context,a word about the general get-up of the book is not irrelevant. It does not strain the eye of the reader with the usual liberties taken by the printers in the matter of grammar, spelling and syntax to the helpless frustration of writers and disgust of the readers.

Author of several significant books, Prof. K. Seshadri of Hyderabad is a well-known scholar–critic of Political Science and the Indian political system.

INDIAN INTEREST IN D. H. LAWRENCE

L.S. Ramaiah and Sachidananda Mohanty

D.H. LAWRENCE STUDIES IN INDIA :
A Bibliography—*Writers' Workshop, Calcutta (1990)*

Review by Dinshaw M. Burorjee

Since the 1960s, literary scholarship in India, bearing on both English and American fiction, has assumed such formidable proportions that it is difficult to keep track of the increasing annual additions to the canon. A book such as *D.H. Lawrence Studies in India : A Bibliography*, by L S. Ramaiah and Sachidananda Mohanty is, therefore, cause for a minor celebration.

The co-authors have included in their book a statistical count made in Japan (taken from Futoshi'a *Bibliography of Studies in the English Novel in Japan*), covering the period 1965-1985, of British novelists appearing most frequently as subjects of articles published in that country. One would wish for such a tabulation for Indian scholars publishing at home and aboard, which would enable an assessment of the importance attaching to particular authors, so that similar bibliographies—embracing dissertations, articles and book—might be forthcoming.

MULTUM IN PARVO

This *D.H. Lawrence Bibliography* is expensively annotated, and its preface by Dr. Dennis Jackson. Editor of *The D.H. Lawrence Review* (Newark and Delaware, USA) is in itself a little gem. The authors' introduction is no less illuminating; and as usual, P. Lal has given us another pretty book. There are, regrettably, some typographical and other errors in it. The most glaring of these is the disparity in the titling of Dr. Bibhu Padhi's book, which incorrectly reads "*The Novels of D.H. Lawrence*" in the addenda, whereas it is correctly given as "*D.H. Lawrence : Modes of Fictional Style*" in Dr. Jackson's preface.

Incidentally, the largest reckoning of publications goes to Dr. B.K. Tripathy (Utkal University, Bhubaneswar) and Dr. Bibhu Padhi (Ravenshaw College, Cuttack), whose lectures on Lawrence are fine instances of scholarship and confirmation of the continuing Indian attention to the man who, according to Alistair Niven, is after Shakespeare, "the most widely studied author in the English langauge." Most remarkable in this attention, as Dr. Jackson notes, is the Indian focus on Lawrence as a critic. He adds parenthetically that "No Western critical anthology has ever devoted such proportionate space to a discussion of Lawrence's work in this genre."

The authors of this *Biblography* are scholars who evince their abiding engagement with Lawrence, not only through their own work, but in their attention to studies by others in India who are equally devoted. This little volume truly merits the accolade *multum in parvo*.

Dr. Dinshaw M. Burjorjee, Emeritus Professor of Literature, Montgomery College, Maryland, (USA) was a Fulbright Visiting Lecturer (1990-91) at the Ravenshaw College, Cuttack (Orissa).

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GLIMPSES OF XIX CENTURY INDIA. . .AND TOWARDS FREEDOM

N.J. Allen, R.F. Gombrich, T. Raj Chaudhary, G. Rizvi (Eds.)
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PAPERS ON INDIA
[Vol. 1 Part 2]
Oxford University Press, Delhi, (1987)

Review by Mohita Kapur

The "*Oxford University Papers on India*" is an occasional publication sponsored by the Centre for Indian Studies, St. Anthony's College and the Inter-Faculty Committee on South Asia The papers included in these volumes are based either on research done at Oxford or papers presented at seminars and conferences sponsored in the University. The present volume is a collection of six papers on diverse topics from modern Indian history.

FARANGI MAHAL FAMILY

The first paper by Francis Robinson deals with the history of the 'Farnagi Mahal' family. This was a learned Mohammedan family of Lucknow which played a considerable part in Indian Islamic Life for about 250 years (18th to mid-20th century). The family traces its history to the Prophet's friend and standard-bearer, Ayub Ansari, whose descendants probably migrated to India around the 14th century and settled at Awadh. Eventually moving to Lucknow, they built up a reputation for their scholarship, while teaching pupils from India and abroad. They travelled widely and also pioneered a new curriculum, the *Dars-i-Nizamiya* which, Robinson says, forms the basis of most *Madrasa* courses in India today.

In the last quarter of the 19th century, the family added a new dimension to its role.Their aim, Robinson points out, became "to defend Islam. . . less through a process of inner renewal. . . . but more by fighting for Islamic issues in public life". This was the time when the political articulation of Indians was unfolding, concomittant to the interaction with British rule. The importance of the family tapered off with loss of patronage and prosperity, and eventually, the partition of India.

Robinson highlights two issues which need more attention. One is that of the material basis of their support or how they survived as a family of Islamic learning, even under less favourable regimes. Related to it, is the problem of the survival of a family tradition—how one family maintained a distinctive style and purpose down the centuries undeterred by various influences.

The second issue is that of identification of the emphasis and quality of their scholarship to facilitate its placement in the right context of not only the 18th century Indian Islamic scholarship, but also of the Islamic World in general.

EURASIANS

In his paper entitled "Eurasians Under British Rule", Richard Symonds divides the history of Eurasians in India, before independence, into three periods, depending on the treatment administered to them : (a) till 1785 (b) 1785–1835 and (c) 1835–1847.

The community suffered no disabilities in the first phase and freely assimilated with the British. In the second phase, they were excluded from government service, and were considered "children of vice". In the third phase, with the Charter Act of 1833, prohibiting discriminations on various grounds for Company's employment, the Eurasians began to be classified as *Indians* for purposes of employment, but *British* for educational and defence purposes. They were mostly employed in railways, telegraphs and customs. As Symonds says, their "mobility, knowledge of English and even more, their loyalty became important for the Imperial Government, as it came to face Indian nationalism."

Sir Henry Gidney, as a leader of the Anglo-Indians, obtained percentage reservations of posts in the Central Services for them, by a vigorous lobbying of the Simon Commission and the Round Table Conferences. These reservations were to the extent of 50% in the customs, 40 per cent in telegraphs and 2.5 per cent in the superior railway and postal services. However, the community was generally looked down upon as "having the worst traits of both races", and thus suffered from complexes.

Symonds has also emphasized the inadequate research done on the subject and, therefore, the necessity of further historical investigations.

THE PARTITION OF INDIA

Another paper is on "Prospects of Agreement and the Partition of India,1939-1947", by Anita Inder Singh. This paper concentrates on the important negotiations between the 1939-1947 period, to study the 'prospects' of an agreement between the Indian National Congress, the Muslim League and the British—the attitudes of each "party" involved, and the extent to which results of each session of proposals and talks paved the way for partition.

On this much-written-about subject, she puts forward the thesis that none of the three (parties) could afford an agreement between the other two at its own cost. The Muslim League never clamoured for independence the way Congress did. The Congress did not want the British conferring unlimited priviges on the League, and the British could not afford a a 'Congress—League settlement' at their own political expense.

Jinnah's 1940 call for Pakistan is seen by Singh as a "ploy" aimed at "achieving something or preventing something". He calculated that "political exigency would stop the British from rejecting Pakistan". Eventually the British desire to maintain "Pakistan as a prop of the Raj led to their formalizing that concept in in a post-war constitutional settlement." Singh holds British intentions responsible for the failure of most proposals of constitutional advancement between the years 1939–1946, and for the "enhanced stature of the League and the growth of the idea of Pakistan".

(*Contd.*)

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GLIMPSES OF XIX CENTURY .... (*Contd.*)

Jinnah achieved Pakistan because "he knew where he was going,", and the British "under-estimated the seriousness of his demand." In the end, he left for the British "a choice of either a scuttle or the forceful capture by the League of the N.W.F.P. and Punjab—both alternatives reflecting their adminsitrative incompetence". Thus, there was, practically speaking, no alternative but partition.

CONGRESS & PROVINCIAL AUTONOMY

Another paper dealing with the same phase of history is "Congress, the Raj and Conflict in Provincial Autonomy, 1937-1939" by Sunil Chander, offering the not-so-new view that "persistent conflict characterised the relationship between the Congress and the Raj in the working of the Provincial Autonomy", The emergence of the Congress as a strong party in the provincial legislatures was not seriously entertained as a possibility by the British. Therefore, the official attitude, before and during the election compaign, inevitably influenced the future working of provincial autonomy.

Some of the sensitive issues creating tension between the Congress Ministries and the Raj were:- Release of political prisoners, Restoration of lands forfeited by Congress supporters during the Civil Disobedience Campaigns. etc. Chander feels that when radical criticism appeared to represent popular feelings, in the party, the ministries joined hands with the militants against the British. The Ministry period was also utilised by the Congress to rebuild its grass-root volunteer organisation. And when the British announced Indian co-operation in the war effort, the Congress leadership demanded a price for it. . . . which was unacceptable to the British, for they could now take the advantage of the formidable challenge that the League had built up, against the position of the Congress. And so the Ministries tendered their resignations.

WEAVERS OF DACCA

An illuminating paper is by Hameeda Hossain on "Working Conditions of the Company's Weavers in the Dacca Arangs 1790-1817", based on hitherto untapped Bengali manuscripts in the India Office. In the wake of commercial needs of East India Company, "arangs" emerged as centres of procurement and manufacture of woven cloth. The labour force was extended advances, and was thus regulated and controlled by the Company. Gradually, as the pressure of demand increased, an elaborate salaried hierarchical supervising machinery was installed with the *gumashta* at the head. The supreme chief was the Commercial Resident. The paper illustrates, with the help of statistics, how the weavers were squeezed beyond their production capacity by the system of advances, which "tendered to obstruct production" and also caused "progressive financial dependence", because a very high percentage of the produce was "ferretted" (rejected). The weaver was compelled to replace the ferretted goods within the stipulated time, and he could not sell the goods in question in the open market to recover costs, and nor could he produce anything for anyone else. He was also subjected to an increasing incidence of fines and charges. Dues of previous years were deducted from the advances made to him; and all these factors conspired to degrade the quantity of produce. The ultimate consequence was migration, default and desertion of occupation, concomittant to the plight of the weavers.

BOMBAY DECCAN : FOUR DECADES OF AGRICULTURE

The last paper in the collection is by Sunanda Krishnamurty entitled "Agriculture in the Bombay Deccan, 1880-1922 : Trends in Area and Output". The Bombay Presidency districts considered in this paper were an area of low irrigation, high dependence on rainfall and, therefore, frequent crop failures and famines.

She illustrates with the help of tables that foodcrop area decreased in both absolute and relative terms. Moreover, given a rising population, this also meant a decrease in per capita availability of food, unless yield of foodcrops or/and imports increased. The expansion in irrigation was also insignificant during the period of the study, in spite of the fact that "the Government fully realised the need for irrigation in the Deccan." Krishnamurty has also refuted the thesis of Neil Charlesworth and Alon Heston on the agrarian trends in the Deccan.

No doubt the papers in the collection are well researched and carefully laid out, but one still feels the inadequacy of certain querries which would have added greater depth to the papers. To give examples, in Hameeda Hossain's paper on the condition of weavers, "ferretting" perhaps appears to be the main reason behind their poverty and indebtedness — but what was the cause of the adoption/popularity of this practice (of rejection of produce) among the Company people ? The goods produced could not have become defective and in great numbers over a very short span of time, the practice of ferretting being much less frequent in the initial years. More so, because the weaver stood to lose doubly by producing defective material, he would, presumably, have taken extra precautions to avoid such default.

Similarly, Anita Inder Singh stating that the British wanted to avoid partition by the wishful thinking that the Muslim League alarmed by "the great proportions" of its demand, would itself back out from its stand on Pakistan, is an over-simplification of the the march of history.

The paper on Farangi Mahallis (*sic*) is more of a documented narration than an attempt at developing a hypothesis and arriving at some conclusion.

However, these observations are not meant to run down the effort which is commendable. One should not miss the volume after being briefed with the gist of the papers—which has been attempted here.

Ms. Mohita Kapur teaches History at the St. Sophia College, Ajmer.

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VOICES FROM THE GHETTOS

S. Balu Rao (Ed.) : LAST MILE TOGETHER
An Anthology of South African Poems
Published by the Afro-Asian Writers' Association

Review by Ananya S. Guha

A few years ago when the poet Jayanta Mahapatra was editing the poetry columns for *The Telegraph Colour Magazine*, Calcutta, a reader wrote a letter to the editor, complaining of the general trend of Mahapatra's selections. The poems, according to him, were mostly morbid, presenting a dry, drab and humourless world. What was the reason for this cheerlessness, he asked, a question that I thought was so obvious that it made it superfluous. And isn't there more to poetry than merely moaning and whining, he contented. I wrote a rejoinder quoting from the high-priest of Latin America poetry, Pablo Neruda, who in one of his poems exhorted his reader to :

"look at the blood in the streets
look at the blood in the streets
look at the blood in the streets". . .

Poetry can never be, or should not be, I think, separated from social suffering. It arises out of a complexity of human experience, a whole range and diversity of it; and the suffering of the masses. The suffering of humanity is one such experience. If much of Indian poetry, whether written in English or in the various vernacular languages, is plunged into despair, it is because that poetry is an expression of the social turmoil which the poet sees around him, for he, like any sensitive individual, is inseparable from his ethos.

SOUTH AFRICAN POETRY

South African Poetry, as this volume under discussion commemorates, is in many ways similar to Indian poetry in English, sometimes referred tritely to as Indo-Anglian poetry. Both have undergone a similar historical mutation in the sense that both are a product of culture, even if it be British culture. The significant instance is the use of the English language by both South African and Indian poets. The paradox and even the irony is that both are using the language of the colonial masters to convey their suffering and alienation. Does this not prove the universality of language, especially in the medium of creative arts and communication ? Perhaps the greatness of any language is its flexibility, its resilience; and South African and Indian writers today have sufficiently exploited the resources of the English language to highlight their sentiments and elemental passions.

Can art transcend reality or realism ? The question is polemical. Writing for the occasion, it may be argued, can be limiting and damaging to the demands of art. It can be sensationalist, grossly exaggerated and simply being 'clever', at the expense of aesthetics and poeticality. Yet, the poems in this volume touch the heart, making inroads into the human spirit. They reveal 'truthfully' the anguish of contemporary man shackled, unable to love and not willing to hate. If love and hate are complex emotions intertwined in the human soul, then the deeply sensitive South African feels it all the more. These poems are full of such feelings. Is it right to hate ? Even if one knows that he is hated ? Would he love to see a white boy burnt just as a black boy has been put to ashes ?

WE MUST GO ON . . . !

The poem entitled "Letter to Mamma" speaks poignantly about the hiatus between the real and the actual, and the conflict within the individual between the two. The poem has been written by Ismail Choonara. Let me quote some lines from it :

". . . That it is the enemy
of the ideal we are defending.
Do not ask me why.

Fred. You know Fred, mom.
Remember Fred. He is dead.
And Bill was killed on the hill.
Some others you know mom
are gone . . .

But we go on, and on, and on.
We are defending an ideal."

EPITOME OF BLACK CULTURE

Dennis Brutus, one of the doyens of South African poetry, has a lyricism difficult to match. He is the insufferable sufferer. To suffer is a must, to suffer is poetry, to suffer is celebration and song. I am quoting the poem—"I am the tree. . ." in full :

"I am the tree
creaking in the wind
outside in the night
twisted and stubborn :

I am the sheet
of the twisted tin shack
grating in the wind
in a shrill sad protest :

I am the voice
crying the night
that cries endlessly
and will not be consoled."

There are similar poems such as this, steeped in an innate lyricism shaping the movement of the poem song-like and calling for great poetry.

TO SUFFER IS POETRY

Johannesburg city is or could have been the epitome of South African "Black" culture. Yet it is now the den of the white man. The ambivalence of the native to the city is hauntingly revealed in the poem "City Johannesburg" by Mongane Wally Serote. The poet celebrates life in the city and his love for it, but he also sees and understands its hidden depravity. Most

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I. H. Rizvi : FALLING PETALS (1975); UNFADING BLOOMS (1984); THIRSTY PEBBLES (1986)

Prakash Book Depot, Bareilly.

Review Article by R. K. Singh

"But who can say that I did not
Artfully play the game". (*We Are Quits*)

Among the Indian poets in the 1980s, Iftikhar Husain Rizvi (b. 1936) has emerged as an important name. A bilingual poet, writer, reviewer, translator, sports-lover, and commentator, broadcaster, editor, and a teacher by profession, Rizvi is considered to be at the heart of the "new" poetry. He has cultivated poetry as a very serious hobby, with outstanding achievements, Widely published, anthologised and commented upon, he has *three volumes to his credit : *Falling Petals* (1975), *Unfading Blooms* (1984) and *Thirsty Pebbles* (1986)—all testifying to George Santayana's dictum: "A man's feet should be planted in his country, but his eyes should survey the world". [*This was a couple of years ago, when this review was written—Eds*]

LOOKING FOR AN URBAN COMMUNITY

Like most urban poets, he is concerned with the problems of society : people's mentality, human relationships, man and his environment, and lack of love and community which beset everyone today. His is not the voice of a person on the road, running away from mass society, but of one who is looking for community in a metropolitan setting. He is willing to submerge himself in nature, culture, and wider societal ecology, not to get lost but to enhance his presonality, imaging a better awareness of the "culture and perversion" that commingle "like fragrance and stink". ('*The Melting Pot*'). Rizvi is aware of today's society where "streams of reason have dried up/And do not feed our minds./ We strut around on borrowed plumes/With hollowed brains...." and ('*Tagore's Dream*')

VOICES FROM THE GHETTOS *(Continued)*

of these poets are intensely aware of their medium.They use a kind of pidgin English, a South African English comparable to Indian English, giving their poems a newness and freshness of expression and experience.

The introduction by S. Balu Rao gives a quick and lucid resume of the history of South African poetry and its rootedness in its history, culture and landscape. In this context, his comments on the individual poems are perceptive.

The world of South African Poetry is the world of man-hated, forced to live in claustral settings, deprived and depraved, yet desperately trying to create order out of disorder; giving sustenance to the belief that all great art is chaotic and 'useless'.

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BEYOND ALL CARES

"The moss of incest and rape is sprinkled,
The fungus of sin is scattered around".

('*The Haunted Place*')

The poet creates a modern ritual of 'exposure' of men and women who do "ha ! hoo ! he !" at the drum whose "music shows no muscles". Drinks and drugs may "stir" them for a moment, but there's no flame. The irony is :

"All are there to play the game,
And yet afraid of playing it ;
Lest each of them should be exposed
To the deep core of hollowness
When the game is over". ('*Exposure*')

He understands the dilemma of today's man, who, like a fisherman, "has been spreading his own net/All woven by himself" ('*The Fisherman*'), but, he also knows he can't help, except possibly by **exposing** evils and weaknesses that control his surroundings.

"It's all the same,
Flesh burns, blood flows, life cries ;
and we boast of our laurels.
The world in silence looks
And turns away to other things". ('*Achievements*')

SOCIO-POLITICAL AWARENESS

His poems like '*Achievement*', '*The Laws of the Jungle*', '*The Murderous Cyclone*', '*Slums*', '*Food*', and '*The World's Flight*' project, among other things, Rizvi's socio-political awareness. He is unequivocal in condemning religions beliefs which lead to ravaged houses, butchered people and "uncoffined souls". ('*Who did it ?*')

He reflects on the contemporary socio-cultural reality of his milieu with a sense of refinement and values, not to gratify the curiosities of an elitist literary humanist, but for crossing man-made boundaries that have been hampering progress. As he declares, he is a traveller in the forest of thought and cannot come out of it "till life crumbles apart" ('*The Empire of Words*').

A ROMANTIC IDEALIST . . .

As a poet, he locates beauty "in the endless kingdom of thought" ('*Lament of Beauty*') just as he tries to capture beauty "in words".

Though the romantic in him makes him wish for the "abode Elysium/And Beauty's choicest blooms", and he longs for "Eden's smiling rivulets" ('*Fragrance*'), it is not an escapist desire. It is as a man of the world to "scan the world" that he puts on the mask of a part "so well" ('*cf* '*Masquerade*'); his "queasy thoughts wish halcyon days/For every sombre trodden soul" ('*Hell of Thoughts*'). Watching "human acts", with "countless desires", he indulges in "fancy's game", sometimes to "see, drink and dine", ('*The Lament of Age*') and sometimes to undress a woman ('*On the Wrong Foot*') or to experience love in all its facets.

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OF THE EARTH

If he tends to personify emotions and attitudes towards his surroundings, as in poems like '*Honesty*', '*The Garb of Sin*', '*Lament for Beauty*', '*Virginity*', '*Thought*' or '*The Forest*', or if he demonstrates the romantics' love for Nightingale, Beauty, Love, Fancy, Sorrow etc, or if he moves from Autumn to Spring to explore Nature's mysteries (reflecting philosophically at times), and if he idealises or moralises, it is always with a *human* concern in a familiar human world, and at the thought level.

In his idealist frame, he sees certain features of social existence as they are, or as postulated in the consciousness, and seeks to transform the world with earthy background over-shadowed by the so-called spiritualist background, be it love, politics, poverty or human suffering. His thinking does not image the state of society as arising from the resolution of the existing contradictions or from the natural transition of one stage to another. There is no sociological analysis in the expression of his ideal as such, but his expression is shaped by the free-play of the imagination, at times indicating that he strives to rise above time. His social imagination, not without critical traits, provides him through the medium of poetry with an alternative social order that compensates for his own frustrations and difficulties.

. . . IN NON-IDEAL SETTINGS

We can listen to the poet's idealist whispers when he expresses disappointment :—for example, with **culture** ("We cry aloud for light in light.
Our culture has attained its height"; and
"Smouldering fires
Of barbarity fed
With feigned fuel of culture
Are changing sides on a burned bed";
cities ("What use is it to look for life
In its true colours in cities
Where slums mock at skyscrapers
And funerals are left
Unattended and unmourned?";
war heroes or **martyrs** ("Their death is a tribute
To treacherousness") ;
moral/sexual corruption

"Did they recall the incidents
Of the last night which had passed
Or were they thinking of the next?;"
Or dissappointment at **erosion of values**, as in the poems '*The Town Crier*', '*Phantoms*' '*The Crutches*', and **loss of spiritual sense**, as in 'Mystery', '*Achievement*', or '*The Memory Lane*'.

The moralist poet evicnes an environmental concern too :

"All trees were stripped of clothes;
The naked branches seemed
To pierce the sky."
....
It was sight
Like that of a graveyard
Where silence, fear and sorrow reign".('*Stripped*')

The environmentalist in him "watches silently" and "broods" over the man, and automobiles around ('*In the Connaught Place Park*') and he feels :

"No doubt life movement means
But it should not move breathlessly,
Nor should it ever doze
Nor drowsy feel like the Hippies
Lying at a distance from the bench
Where I now sit and watch and brood".

There is a grim warning with a note of irony in '*Gun Powder*' too.

MOODS OF LOVE & DESPAIR

If Rizvi romanticises love, pain or despair, or if he tends to philosophise (for example, 'Love waits for the world to calm down /But feels helpless and melts away"), or if many of his poems move between longing and regret, it is because he tries to transform simple, quotidian events into visionary experiences. (though, at times, he may remain happy with capturing the superficial, as in the poems '*Undiscoverd*', or *Difference*').

He tries to project a social meaning on even personal feelings of loss, despondence and self-pity, as in the poems '*A Point of No Return*'—("For once such woods have withered away/No might can make them fresh again"), '*We Live and Weep and Die Alone*'—("To none our own we can e'er call;/Here faith sink in the sea of doubt,/Here all ties break, all vows soon fall,/Love candle flickers, soon dies out".), '*My Bleeding Sorrow*','*Pause Awhile*', and "*Tarry Love*'.

The anger of the non-moral self of the poet works through **irony** : (*'The Marriage must Go on*', '*Morning Prayer*', '*The Show Goes on*', '*The World's Plight*', '*Tagore's Dream*', '*Close Contacts*,' '*The Queen*', '*Anklet Bells*' etc), **humour** : ('*The Plight of Angels*', '*Respite*', '*The Uncaged*' *etc*), and even **parody.**

The ambiguity between sexual desire, guilt, fear and loss animates some of his poems like '*Attractive Stains*', '*The Garden of Love*', and '*On the Run*' :

"Restlessness-drenched blase souls,
Bereft of graceful calm,
Hit by the darts of doles,
Seek fleecing pleasure's balm
To heal their bleeding sores.
Tumultuous noieses goad
Their legs to keep on course
On hustling crowded road.
They find no resting place.
To nurse their wounds awhile.
Love, peace, delight and grace
Melt in the ponds of guile.
False oaths and stingy vows
Lead them to dens of vice.
Souls are e'er on the run
On jostling roads of life". ('*On the Run*')

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LOVE ALL EMBRACING

Though quite a few of Rizvi's poems are rooted in nature he tries to measure the body's rhythm by nature's pulse, sometimes trying to fuse physical passions with his surroudings, thus developing a complex of body, nature and passion (*Cf.* '*Released*', '*Suffocation*' *etc.*)—he offers certain poems with spiritualist echoes of some of the poets of the past. For example,

"Is it the beetle in the bud
Or the bud in the beetle ?"
('*The World Knows no Better*')

and,

"I long to mingle in your soul,
As thought embraces thought in dream,
As waves sail on the crown of sea,
As sighs on breast of sweetheart roll,
As thrills in thrills pulsate and gleam,
As melts in pardon sympathy". ('*Yearning*')

To Rizvi, love is its own reward : "The great reward of love is love,/Nothing but love" ('*Reward*'). As he has faith in its life-giving power ('*The Wound*') he invites Love to come to him from all sides "and be absorbed for ever in me/As hue in hue and soul/. . . So that none should know who is who" ('*Invitation*'). It seems poetry in him begins as a love-sickness :

"I have loved you,
Lived for you and pined for you,
Pined, throbbed and burned for you.
For you pined, throbbed and burned;
Through days and nights
...
For you and for you alone
I live and throb and burn,
Though you may not be mine". ('*For You*')

Though he also finds,love binds one as "shackles" and ultimately proves disappointing ("Touch me not ! You'll get burnt./Follow me not; I am love").

In his lyric, '*The Chasms*', he particularly discovers emptiness of a woman's love :

"Love dives deep
Into a woman's heart,
Swimming and searching
For gems and pearls,
Gropes in the abyss
Of ocean-bed;
After searching for long
Sights a few shells,
Breaks them open,
But finds they are empty".

A LOVE-HATE MIXED VIEW OF WOMAN

Though he is sympathetic to the condition of women in India ('*Achievement*') and he has all praise for womanhood; but he does not seem to accept woman in her totality. For example, he is baffled with women who have "hung virtues upside down". His selective preferences in the female result in a moralist love-hate attitude :

BEYOND ALL CARES

"Who can analyse a woman's mind
Or pass through labyrinths
Of her inexplicable thoughts ?
All praise for womanhood,
But when vice catches hold of it
It can ne'er be restrained
From having its own way".
('*On Looking at Three Women*')

"Whores and witches" seem to shock his moral sense, "Oh God, forbid !" as he exclaims in the poem '*Caught*'. Elsewhere he does not want to even think about women or "roam/In unknown Beauty's wood", because he has experienced :

"To dote on womanhood
Is sure to come to grief;
A woman's kindness is too brief".('*Fair Thoughts*')

A poem on woman may be interesting, but a woman is not a poem It is all the more baffling when, in one of his ecstatic moods, he says a woman is "a world of reality", "faith personified" and "the sea of love" ('*Who says You are a Poem ?*')

SEXUAL OVERTONES & UNDERTONES

As the poet's ideas and thoughts derive from his physical senses too, sexual overtones and undertones can be felt in his use of comparisons, whatever the theme. For example,

"The lusty, testy fruit
Turns juicy, pulpy, poppy-drunk;
The two petalled lotus,
Oozing white honey from sticky lips
The volley of kisses raining down
From moulten, groggy lips
Melts over ecstasied faces;
The dreamy-eyed, withdrawing thrills
Pine for the brimful act again". ('*Released*')

and :

"Love-drunk Adam and Eve
Are like two patches of grey clouds
Draw close and clash
With a quick dash
And all is over soon" ('*The Patches of Clouds*')

and :

"The lioness is ferocious;
Nobody can cage or chain her.
The jackal in her service
Is a cuckold.
The lioness needs a towering lion
To lay her flat in her own den;
She is sex-starved", ('*The Uncaged*')

and :

"The most luscious slice
Is heart–shaped, dunlop cushioned
And arced and smooth like finished glass.
It's supple and lissom;
When titilated and pressed
And nestled and squelched,

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OF THE EARTH

It opens out its arms
To the welcme onslaught
In the sea of surrender.

...
Such a soft and savoury slice
Needs knives and forks of steel
And teeth of stone.
If taken by the feathered spoon,
It mocks the verveless eater". ('*The Slice*')

PASSIONS AND BEYOND

Several poems tend to glorify carnal passions to recreate the social order and control the personal chaos. For example, '*The Bride of Spring*', '*Lesbians*', '*Fancy's Favourite Game*', '*Caught*', '*We are Quits*', '*On the Wrong Foot*' etc. There are references, occasionally psychologising personified states or projecting linked states of awareness. The poet has experienced so much of this world—from poverty to power, and cruelty to mercy and crooked lust to virtuous fulfilment—that at times he wonders: "Should I feel sad or should I not?" (*I Have Seen*') and "Who can remove the scorches, burns/And scars? Which ointment or what medicine?" ('*The Burns*').

With his romantic enthusiasm waning, he sounds like a searcher: "Where is the lasting cure/For grief and ache and burns and wounds" ('*Re-appearance*')

His awareness becomes realistic when he realises that the "castles of desires" are shattered soon "by hard, rough stones of reality" ('*Castles*') and "The ocean is unfathomed/Only the surface gleams". ('*Mystery*').

He also tries to achieve some sort of 'impersonality' by composing poems on themes or objects of every-day life, like stones, fire-flies, crutches, roads, onions, cotton balls, cobweb, football, boat, butterflies, chip of fire-wood, weeds, garments, coin, cart, slice, mango, grind-stones, feathers, pinions, roses, forest, insect, moths, leaves, operation etc. As a social romanticist, he applies his craft to the reality near-at-hand in order to extract some human truths that are redeemable and chosen.

HIS STRUGGLES & PERFORMANCE

He seems to mix values and facts, emphasizing both the inner and outer social behaviour, sometimes providing clues to his own inner life. In his commitment to the passional act of struggle—struggle with the dimensions of his world—he internalises the patterns of cultural, social, religious, philosophical, natural, moral, and even mythic observations (a myth in him appears as a response to the environment, an interaction between the mind and its external world), giving them a fresh artistic ordering by subjecting them to his personal vision, He creates images and contexts that weave moods, dreams and sensations, and his creativity lies in communicating varied experiences with skill.

It is his poetic performance rather than the individual poems that should stand to his merit, the overall consistency of tone and diction; the tightness of practically every poem (I strongly feel, Rizvi's poetry is held vibrantly within tensions); the use of rhyme and assonance with the same ease as the use of free verse; the use of vivid imagery and metaphors in unison with emotions; the use of repetitive devices (repetition of the form too) that heighten the meaning of the message; the use of formulaic expressions in the poetic discourse that secure and hold readers' attention; the use of folk rhythm (as in the poems '*Football*' and '*The Magic of World*') that unites sound and meaning; the use of the past (personal or otherwise) to express his beliefs about the present; and above all, the piling of simile upon simile, his forte, that creates mood or adds to the thought rhythm. For example:

"Fire-flies can't bear this atmosphere
And soon their bodies set on fire;
Keep floating through the fragrant air,
As o'er love's palace sails desire,
As twinkle gems on Vulcan's robe,
As pearls shine on a desert queen,
As candles heaven's secret probe
And close to welkin's treasure lean". ('*Fire-flies*')

and,

"Whatever form I take I have
But one aim in my view :
To suck your blood.
Like Proteus I may change my form;
Like Hercules may turn my gait.
A modern god, a mountebank,
A zernebock, a pythoness,
A hoarder or a profiteer,
A black marketeer, I may be,
How can one leave one's prey alone?'
('*Achievement*')

and

"Cast the magic spell,
Hold me like an enchantress,
Touch me, press me, crush me,
Stream down the thrills
Into every pore of mine.
Heat me into your oven
Like an iron bar,
Keep me in your jaws
Like a hungry lioness,
Hold me sportingly,
Suspend the flight of time
Grip the law of motion
Clutch the movement of age,
Bloom like the eternal spring,
Bubble like a perennial stream,
Keep fresh like a goddess.
I want to stay young" ('*I Want to Stay Young*')

MUSIC OF ECSTASY

He easily lapses into ecstasy by means of similes that also act as instances of musical language wrestled out of the fires of feeling and experience. His strength, also sometimes seems to reside in cultivation of longer line and accumulation of sensory experience that can mirror the fulness and subtlety of nuance he is drawn to in the outer or inner world.

(Continued)

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Beyond All Cares of The Earth. . . *(Contd.)*

RESTRAINED & READABLE FREE VERSE

Though he is not always committed to precision, even if most of his poems are in free verse, he seems to exercise restraint (as in '*Virginity*'). Despite the use of cliche, expressions and trite phrases like "dizzy heights", "fair sex", "broken dreams", "soft melody", "awesome silence", "perfect union", "hushed tones", "airy nothing", "beauteous hues", "wistful eyes", "love-lorn youth", "rapt attention", "halcyon days", "creast-fallen", "magic touch", "warm embrace", "object of its love" *etc.*), despite his use of non-contemporary poetic words ("hath", "doth", "ere", "oft", "wert", "adieu", "anon", "morn", "eve", "whither", "babe" *etc.*), despite the use of sentence fragments/phrases (as in '*The World's Plight*'), ellipses or dashes leaving the readers hanging (as in '*The Goblet*', '*The Queen*', '*Stones*', '*Fancy's Favourite Game*', '*I have seen*', '*Gun Powder*', '*The Young Priestess*', '*The Boatman*' *etc.*), he remains extremely readable, rich and stimulating.

He is adept at handling his idioms : "The forest is/A free society", "Is this the garden I had come/To see with the keenest desires ?", and

"It's hard to keep the flying horse chained,
The flood of feelings restrained.
I must court death to reach her".

('*The Next Floor*')

He is experimental too, as in '*Modern Modes*' (a 26-line poem using letters A to Z)—

"Adroit accomplices amass applause;
Black-guards bestrew behaviour bellicose.
Crowd coquettes crazy concourse clandestine;
Daunt downright dastards debonair design", etc.

or in '*Shadows*' :

"Tear-stained faces,
Fog-laden eyes,
Death-falconed pale traces.
Wound-sprinkled lean bodies,
Grief-conquered cheeks
Sucked by the wasteland bees
Time-ploughed rough streaks,
Hope-lost mutterings lips,
Youth-oozed wrinkled foreheads. . ."

Rizvi has already found his stride as a poet. Using poetry as a means to outgrow "all cares of the earth", he speaks under the stress of the moment with skill and grace, flow and intensity of feeling, clarity and integrity of attitude, correlating experience with expression. His wide range of concerns and rhythms of thought make the fabrics of his communication "glow with passion, agony and almost always contemporary significance". May be, as a poet he still rails against his situation, without being able to alter it; but he has the hope and satisfaction : "I have not lived and loved in vain."

As a major growing voice of the 1980s, Rizvi's poetry deserves serious study by scholars of contemporary Indian English Writings.

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A RICH FARE

V.K. Saxena & C.D. Vashist
COST AUDIT and MANAGEMENT AUDIT
Sultan Chand & Sons, New Delhi (1991) pp 488 Rs 50

Reviewed by K. K. Sarin

The language used here is simple and crisp, which makes it an absorbing reading of a highly technical subject of cost audit and management audit. The Audit Code of the Indian Audit & Accounts Department was rich in contents and beautifully worded; it was a pleasure to read it every time. After a long time I had a similar feeling while going through the book under review.

COMPREHENSIVE TEXT BOOK

The first chapter, Overview of Cost Audit, is itself an indicator of the comprehensive knowledge and practical awareness of the authors about all types of audit. It is a scholarly presentation in a lucid form. The trend has been maintained throughout the book. Eleventh chapter on Management Audit is encyclopedic. It can enlighten not only the ICWA and M.Com. students but also prefessiona! auditors and those in the higher echelons of management.

The authors claim that it is a standard text-book is justified by the inchsion of all-embracing material on each topic relating to Cost Audit and Management Audit. About a hundred pages in the book cover problems with suggested answers, picked up from examination papers of ICWA & CIMA. These should be of great help to the students who need not go in for ony other book on the subject.

THOUGHT PROVOKING

The book also involves the readers in a thinking process by painting out the shortcomings in the objectivity of intermittent cost audit as at present/making full use by the government of the information contained in cost audit reports. Very few books prompt snch thinking.

ENHANCED UTILITY

Incorporation of a new section II (in chapter 12) giving extracts/guidance notes on Modvat, Valuation of Excisable goods, International Aceounting Standards, Indian Accounting Standards, International Auditing and Indian Statements as Standard Auditing Practices has enhanced the utility of the book, particularly for practising auditors/consultants/financial executives.

NEW CONCEPTS

Detailed discussion of Cost Audit as an Efficiency Audit/Propriety Audit is well brought out. The coverage of comparatively new concepts viz, Social Cost and Social Benefits, Social Auditing, Energy Audit and System Audit has increased the worth of the book.

With its rich fare, the book is reasonably priced at Rs. 50, though there are plenty of proof-reading errors which mar it.

Mr. K.K. Sarin, 568 Sector 6, Panchkula–135109

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MAN & ENVIRONMENT—IN THE KHADAR BELT OF MEERUT

C. Mumtamayee : RURAL ECOLOGY
Ashish Publishing House, New Delhi, maps/figures 31, pages 214, Rs. 200/-

Review by S.P. Sinha

In this monograph, a possible adaptation of her doctoral dissertation, Mumtamayee states that her aim is ". . .to provide a conceptual framework for studying man—environment relationship at micro level". Accordingly, she has rightly selected an active flood plains area—the *Khadar* tract of Meerut district. Here an empirical investigation has been made by the author to present an ecological study with a focus on man, which she calls *Rural Ecology*. This is indeed a bold undertaking in a field where concepts are yet to crystalise for operational research work.

Mumtamayee's scheme of presentation and chapters is quite logical, well illustrative, and at times, supported by empirical findings. However, there may be some question as to whether the methodology so employed can be utilized and to what extent by scholars in similar studies in future.

STUDY AREA & HABITAT SYSTEM

The monograph is presented in seven chapters. Chapter one is the introduction, where the 'study area' has been identified to acquaint the readers with some basic knowledge about the *Channel environment*, often prone to inundation or flow of rivers.

Chapter two presents a zonal pattern of the study area, such as, *Bangar* edge sub-system, *Bangar* edge, *Khola* zone, Reception zone, Valley flats etc., which, according to the author,are due mainly to the channels. These zones are, henceforth, referred to as *Khadar* habitat. Hence, each *khadar* habitat is based on the phenomenon of inundation caused by channels and is called a habitat system *(see figure 2.10)*. This *khadar* habitat system, according to the author, behaves as a homeostatic system, if only geomorphic processes were to operate upon it. Chapter three deals with the *khadar* habitat as the home of organisms, such as man, plant, and animals i.e. *khadar* biota.

Here, the components of *khadar* biota in general, and the cultivated plants in particular, form an important variable, whereas animals share the *khadar* environment with a wider environmental perspectives.

Man—who is considered as the main focus of study in human ecology—has been analysed as "man at population level of structural organization", and "man at community level" of the biosphere in general.

DYNAMICS OF POPULATION & HUMAN COMMUNITY SYSTEM

Chapter four presents to the reader the results of the empirical study of humans at the 'population level' to reveal the spatial structure of population distribution through the numbers of *clumps* (clusters of individuals at village/micro level), density (in terms of carrying capacity of land) or ecological density, the mechanism of distribution of *clump* in space, guided basically by the negative areas with excess or deficiency of water under the valley flat, and *Bangar* edge sub-system. Finally, the dynamics of population is considered alongwith the natural growth and migration phenomena etc., with the help of sophisticated mathematical models.

The fifth chapter reveals human community as a *variable* in the *khadar* system, which operate at three spatial scales,*viz.* organismic—operating at family level; local—operating at village level; and environmental, operating at environmental level. This community system shares its boundaries with the inorganic habitat system as part of the *khadar* environment on one hand, and it shares its boundaries with the rural and urban systems as part of the much larger cultural environment, on the other. The community, according to the author, is as complex as that of the organism in question, i.e., man focussed in human ecology.

SETTLEMENTS & DWELLINGS

Chapter six deals with the settlements and the lines of circulation in the *khadar* ecosystem. Here, dwellings are considered as the hardware—storing the energy of the eco-system. The dynamics of the settlements, therefore, are the inter-play of the dwellings, circulation system and other variables of the environment. These, therefore, have been studied through the studies of structural details of the *hardware* (dwellings) based mainly on 1971 Census figures, and the lines of circulation, specially of matter and energy resulting from the dynamics of an eco-system.

Finally, the dynamics of the settlement system has been studied through a diffusion process, which operates through the lines of circulation—technique identical to that of plant succession. Chapter seven, as usual, is the presentation of the summary of the analysis in the earlier chapters.

On the whole, this study is a bold attempt by the author in the emerging field and much-publisized subject of ecology. The study may prove to be a pace-setter for future studies in the field of "settlement system" in general. On the whole, the comprehensibility has improved mainly due to presentation of flow-charts, maps and diagrams, and illustrations from topographical maps. The quality of the book may have risen to a higher scale, if the author or the publisher could have produced better visual diagrams and maps.

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OF PEOPLE & PLACES—ON LIVING & DYING

Vera Sharma : THE BLIND MUSICIAN AND OTHER INDIAN POEMS

Writers' Workshop, Calcutta. pp.60. Flexi-back: Rs. 40/-

Comment by Lalit M. Sharma

When Yeats wrote that it is "our first business to paint or describe desirable people, places, states of mind", he not only stated a cardinal principle in creative wtiting, but also an admonition to writers, to those who get trapped in contrived constructs of poetic creations, The latter, only the naive will accept as an example of originality. The book under review is free of all laboured pretensions. It is about "People" and "Places", "Living" ond "Dying". These are actually the four sections into which Vera Sharma divides her fourth collection of poems.

BLIND, WHAT DO WE SEE ?

"Behind his blind eyes/What did he see ?" —a line from the title poem seems to project the effort of the poet. It is the poet who has access to sudden illuminations, to new insights on this world—which loses its charm for its being too familiar to us, the common men and women. Immersed in the monotony of our existence, we mareh into 'blindness'. We cease to notice what is new or beautiful, rather the very phenomena of life, the mysterious onrush of events, objects, and the pain that is not ours.

Vera Sharma brings to bear on her observations a sympathy which, at times, loosens into the sentimental. The descriptions are evocative, illuminating, though at certain places, these dither into statements that are flat. Or, a metaphor meanders into a linguistic yawn as in the poem "The Bouquet". Or, the opening lines of "Ending" : "As winter is to the end of a year,/So old age is to the end of a life". Contrast this with the "fingerless/hand outstretched/like a blighted branch" in the poem on lepers, and we seem to get some reason to feel assured about the present book. The emotion gets a more intense edge as we arrive at a line like : "Out of their obliterated faces/Only their eyes were human".

A MIXED FARE

The Blind Musician is a mixed fare, with both the moments patently poetic and reluctant recipes that barely survive transcription into the *word* of poetry. What strikes one most is the 'seeking' after objects in the arid plains of human landscape, and to that. the indulgent sentiments get attached. This is true of the poems in the sections called "People" and Dying". The mass murderer of forty—' is he sane enough to be hanged ?" The blind musician singing *a la* Krishna plays to "a myriad/people with deaf ears". The woman has only a "wounded ego", and the husband "loved her for all/the things he made/her sacrifice", and the abused wife is "fasting and praying for/that drunken son's longevity". Out of the "flames of her pyre", her son (Rajiv Gandhi) emerged "as the only answer to. . . nation's cry". And, then the buried child may per chance "be feasted upon/by hungry jackals"; the vultures, the poisoned flesh, the carrion bird scared, and the fish—the thing of beauty "is reduced to a bloody mess". Senstivity is a fine possession; but it should not make human mind shrivel into nervous movements when confronted with the logic of existence.

The other two sections, "Living" and "Places" continue to provide a fare that one is not surprised to find in magazines among loose sallies of thought, articles one reads in the comfort of a journey or at home.

CALL OF THE BIRDS & HIMALAYAN PEAKS

The "afternoon siesta" is devoted to "sorting out" the calls of the birds. In the *shikara* at "Dal Lake", and the memory of "Khadakvasla", Vera Sharma brings to life the ethos of a natural environ, and bewails the "lost ethos". The "earthy truck-driver" must "meditate" like the "sadhu hidden/in a Himalyan cave". While "Nostalgia in the Scholarly Library" is infectious for its appeal, "Manali' and "Pahalgam, Kashmir" have those extraordinary feelings which a person from an urban set-up may experience in the quiet of a hill-station. The climb to the "Himalyan Peaks" almost becomes a concentrated metaphor; the rhythm varies beautifully after the gasping steps to the summit. "An Indian Summer" comes as a beautiful surprise—most of the poems in "Living" section betray a lack of subtlety, the very fine turn of the phrase that could lift the everyday experienced feelings into a poetic emotion. "The Liberated Woman" becomes an impassioned plea, though the prayer to the goddess seems to interfere with the tense emotion that is built through the poem.

A book of poems like *The Blind Musician* has what one may call 'direct social utility'. It should certainly prove of interest to those who are interested in the society they live in.

Dr. Lalit M. Sharma teaches English in the Govt. College, Dharamshala (H.P.).

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NOT A CHILD'S PLAY

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R. K. Murthi : FREE-LANCING
Reliance Publishing House, New Delhi; Pps.281;Rs.280/-

Review by Tribhuvan Nath

Being designed to initiate the dilettanti into the secrets of the prof ssion of journalism, *Free-lancing* easily falls in the category of "teach your-self" genre of publications. It cannot be called a primer for journalists It merits a much higher rating It can serve as a manual alike for the amateur and the professional.

Nothing could be more welcome than being initiated into the vocation by a free-lancer of Mr. Murthi's standing. Since 1958, it has been his metier to pen skits and "middles" for Indian journals and produce delectable literature for children. His book will prove of immense utility to the faculty of mass communication in universities all over the country. It serves a long-felt need when no 'guides' are available.

In a course of twelve chapters, the author tells us how to make a choice of one's subjects and, how to gain access to source material. He guides one to systematic methods to develop a cogent, readable story from newspaper snippets, and present them in a form palatable to readers, and acceptable to the editor. He gives valuable tips on the art, craft and techniques of creative and journalistic writings in all their diversiiy. The author says, "Free-lancing is not a child's play. It requires hard work. It demands a natural aptitude to write".

MANY FACES OF JOURNALISM

Beginning with his analysis of the meaning and origin of the hyphenated word, "free-lancing", Mr. Murthi devotes a chapter to "Armour of Humour". A journalistic piece carrying a larding of humour finds ready acceptance. Before trying your hand, the author says, "Ask your self whether you have a sense of humour".

In a chapter on "Literary Diversions", the reader is initiated into the techniques and methods of penning free-lance poems, fiction (including short story) and essays and criticism. His literary allusions drawn from English and Indian authors bring a whiff of fresh air.

The reader is told in a chapter on "Children's Literature" that it offers a vast unexplored field. Each chapter ends with a summary of the points discussed in the text.

The rest of the book relates to the more serious items on the free-lancer's agenda. It is the chapterisation which speaks of the author's methodical approach to the subjects under his ken

The subject chosen can be anything from oceanography to astronomy. The contents may be summed up chapterwise as "Knowledge-Sharing", "Specialised Interests", "Art of Interviewing", "Personality Parade" and "Translations".

The most useful by far is the chapter on "Aids to Free-lancing". The last chapter is designed to give pep-talk to the scribe distressed over the procession of rejection-slips from the editor. The chapter title "Sky is the Limit" forcefully brings out the limitless scope for free-lancing.

The object behind the enumeration of diverse fields and themes is clear enough. The beginner can feel reassured that he can pick up any subject under the sky—even beyond the sky ! Mr. Murthi tells the novice, "Choose the field in which you want to operate as a free-lancer with great care." He counsels the novice to "find out if you are made for the role."

The author's exposition of the techniques and art of free-lance journalism marks him out as a master of the craft. He brings to bear a deep insight in identifying the beginner's problems and a rare sincerity of purpose in suggesting ways to overcome the obstacles.

ART OR SCIENCE : IDEA & ITS TOOL—THE WORD

The introduction of limericks and Clarihews makes the reading highly delectable. What jars occasionally, even if such occasions are few and far between, is the author's penchant for "Do's" and "Don'ts", his Pedantry. He recommends simplicity in prose style, an advice he himself follows His prose is remarkable for its lucidity and raciness, the hallmark of modern journalistic writing Whether free-lancing is a science, as suggested casually (by the author), or an art, is an issue which merits further debate. His observations on idea, as a resource material, and word as a tool (of free-lancer) merit serious attention.

On cannot but cite here briefly the author's advice to a greenhorn :

—Maintain a scrapbook, an idea bank and a file of clippings;

—Before drafting it, decide "Whether you have to tell a story or a story to tell" ; and

—Only one rule you observe : "Handle ideas with care".

There is no dearth of themes one can peg one's thoughts upon. To quote Mr. Murthi, "When it comes to free-lancing, there are no limits, except those set by your own mental reservations."

Mr. Murthi counsels the scribe to avoid carping crititicism With due deference to this principle, one may call attention to his advice to the beginner to take a stance sometimes to make his article interesting. Taking sides will no doubt make an article interesting. There are at least two places where mention is made of political satire, a form currently in rage, and its leading exponents, though the tips offered on this species of writing are rather miserly.

What one misses here is a bibliography and an index. The price is high enough to keep the book out of the reach of those it is intended to aid After the author's learned observations on the root of the hyphen in "Free-lancing", it looks odd that the title on the jacket overlooks the point in his exposition. Curiously enough, on the jacket, the author's name is spelt "Murthi" though, on the opening page inside, it is spelt as "Murthy". These howlers do not fortunately impede comprehension.

Mr. Tribhuvan Nath is a Chandigarh-based press correspondent.

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HOSANNAS TO MAN by Pawan Khera

He said, I;
He wanted to question;
He thought;
He sought knowledge;
He unravelled;
Darkness to Him meant absence of light;
He knew how to live;
To Him, doing meant creating;
He was armed with Justice and Reason;
He had five senses, He knew;
His five senses perceived reality;
He had a potent will;
He was proud, for He was virtuous;
To Him, He and existence were a physical reality;
He knew, He had volition;
To Him, self meant the Mind;
To Him, sacrificing the Self meant denial to live;
He knew, He had potentials to realise and tap;
His morality was a product of reason;
To Him Morality meant a code of ethics, compatible to His nature, created by the centre of His mind to expand its periphery;

To Him, the moral was the real, the practical, the perceivable; the identifiable—the material supplied by His five senses to His mind, to know the TRUTH;

To Him, matter without mind was phlegmatic just as mind without, matter was ghostly;
Matter, to Him, was an identity, for the consciousness to identify;

His Body and Mind were synchronised; the Mind rationalised what the body perceived. The body obeyed what the mind decided;
His body and mind functioned but in unison; the body helped the mind to think, rationalise and reason. The mind helped the body to act to fulfill it desirable desires;
He strove towards objective reality; found it and lived with it;

He lived on earth, unravelling the mysteries of nature for His safety; tailoring His environment to His shape, processing it to His appetite. He invented. He discovered. He found. He realised. He rationalised and reasoned His way to freedom via TRUTH.

We, they said.
They wanted Him to obey.
They intuited.
They mastered beliefs.
They worshipped.
To them, it was, a presence by itself.
They knew, how not to die.
To them, it meant not undoing.
They, with mercy and faith.
They had six, they felt.
Their non-existent sixth, delved into incomprehensible divinities.
They, an impotent wish.
They were humble, for they were vicious.
To them, they and existence were an ontological absurdity.

They felt, they were but conditioned chemicals.
To them, it was an unsanctifiable ego.
To them, it was a step towards the sublime.

They, they felt had predetermined orbits and choicelessly revolved in the zero of their lives.
Theirs' was founded on an imponderable faith.
To them, morality meant the inscrutable commandments, recorded in their religious texts, mythically pumped into the 'deserving ears of a deserving Prophet'—too whimsical to be human, on a holy mountain—too high to be scaled by ordinary mortals, by a god—too petty to admire human greatness.

To them, the moral was the unreal, the impractical, the imperceivable; the unidentifiable—the incomprehensible material supplied to the imaginary sixth sense, not by the five senses, but by the gibberish pronounced by the mystic and the meaningless jargon of the politician. They thus defied TRUTH.
To them, mind was a non-entity; the material supplied to it by the five senses was sheer sophistry.

Matter and consciousness, to them, were illusory and hence their consciousness had nothing to identify but the emptiness within and without.
Their bodies and minds were constantly tortured by the textual morality, the unrationalised guilt-bound desires and the occasional whimpers of their foggy consciousness.
Their bodies and minds schizophrenically indulged in internecine pursuits, denying each other's existence.

They got lost in the musty dungeons and narrow bylanes of their fragmented consciousness, helplessly distanced from the highway of clarity.
They lived on earth but fantasised heaven, mystified by the thunder, afraid of the lightening, worshipping the sunrise, sagging under the carcasses of tradition, enslaved by the mystic, who did not let them live freely on earth but promised life after death and freedom in the grave.

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BETWEEN DESIRE & RENUNCIATION—AND BEYOND

Kulwant Singh Gill : BEYOND THE SPECTRUM
Writers' Workshop, Calcutta (1990) pp. 64.

Review by S.S. Narula

It is usual for creative writers to choose from a broad area of life the subjects they work upon, and to deal them in the broader context of their imagination. Such objects of observation seldom ignite the sacred flame in the glow of which the more objective reality turns into something which is eternal and changeless. The poet has to look beyond the spectrum of everyday life to authenticate his vision of objects as colourful and sublime.

LUST FOR LIFE & BEYOND

Dr. K.S. Gill has given to his second collection of poems the title '*Beyond the Spectrum*', which is indeed suggestive of the themes he has chosen to poeticise in this volume. Spectrum symbolises the variety, the change and loveliness of terrestrial existence. Beyond this spectrum, there is the radiant ray which perhaps indicates that, behind the shifting shadows of phenomena, there is the ever-effulgent ray of eternity that, at blessed poetic moments, touches the soul and makes us aware of its presence. This accounts for the fact that, in spite of the poet's lust for life, which is quite evident from poems like 'Desire', 'Dream Girl', 'Blazing Beauty' and 'Spring', more than two thirds of poems are of metaphysical nature. The pre-occupation of the poet's mind with things metaphysical is no mere accident.

Each poem, even though it has lyrical undertones and has an internal rhythm of its own, has a metaphysical connotation which seems to be mainly due to environmental effects, both subjective and objective. The poet writes out of a sense of personal identification with the different incidents he has come across, whether it is 'The Garbage Gleaner' girl or a visit to Naina Devi shrine.

SYMBOLS

'Desire' and 'Renunciation' seem to be the predominant motifs that impart a poetic unity to the whole book. Metaphysical poetry cannot dispense with symbolism. Symbolism is the concretisation of an abstraction to convert the inner awareness of an individual with his social consciousness. It has been an effective literary tool for making a mosaic of words to convey the poetic message. In the poem 'Desire', the setting sun symbolises a sweet and sad music; and interconnected with it are the symbols of the yearning moon and the star-spangled night which evoke memories of things past, the desire of the human psyche like a cave painting, a filigree work in a church window. Similarly, in 'Resolution', the poet seems to plunge from the pinnacle of sensuality into an abyss of renunciation when he hears in the thick forest the summons of the hawk and the horse, two symbols closely related to Sikh religion Again, 'Awakening' is a beautiful expression of spiritual regeneration when the man lying on the beach hears '*Aum*'.

CONVICTION & ETHNIC SENSIBILITY

Dr Gill is a poet with a conviction, a poet of ethical sensibility, a tendency which was pronounced in his first collection *Scattered Beads*, and which shows greater refinement in poems like 'Modern Arjuna', 'Anima' and 'Saviour' in the present volume. Even the cactus flower in 'The Cactus Flower', symbolic of the male creative organ is transformed into *Shiv lingam* and becomes a potent symbol of creativity. The poet crosses the barriers of culture. and to him, Shiva and Naina Devi are as precious culture-symbols as the Saviour or Arjuna.

The poet is also aware of what is happening around him ; and in poems like 'The Blue Star', he obliquely refers to the damage done to the Sikh psyche and the resultant anguish, a feeling of alienation and isolation that he has come to experience in his land.

However, Dr. Gill refuses to yield to a mood of despair. He does not hang down his hands in despairing impotence and relies on the age-old Indian belief of human perfectability. Nevertheless, his modern sensibility, the instinct for balancing objective reality and its subjective appraisal, make his poetry not the cry of a disgruntled ideologist, but the longing for the perfect in life and letters.

Award-winning Punjabi novelist, short story writer, poet and critic—and an educationist (former Principal & Head P.G Deptt of English, Govt. College Ludhiana) Dr S. S. Narula is also ex-Member, Executive Board, Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi.

He, the MAN, the inventor; the individual, the discoverer, the questioner; He, the true seeker of TRUTH;

While the mystic denounces MAN to god;
While the leader denounces MAN to men;
While the fence-sitter faces the eternal riddle that asks whether :—

They, the MEN, the gang of guilt-laden parasites; the horde of meek-whim-worshippers; the multitude of mindless brutes; they, the fakers of TRUTH.

MAN> men ?
MAN< men ?
MAN= men ?
MAN≥ =men ?
MAN≤=men ? To MAN, men owe civilisation.

Generations of men who have barbarously crucified this deifiable Christ and cursed this worshippable God;
Men, who have slain this exaltable Mahatma and filled the cup of Socrates with poison;
Men, who punished Galileo and executed Kepler ;
Were these men to be unMANned, where would they be ??? [*Mr. Pawan Khera is a young social activist of Udaipur*].

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LAMENTS OF A SAD SOUL

Chandak Chatterji : ANOTHER DORIAN GRAY
Writers' Workshop, Calcutta (1990)

Review by Tejinder Kaur

In this collection of twenty-four poems, the poet seems to be searching "for meanings of life/of death/of beginning/of end/of joy/of sorrow/of yesterday/and the morrow/", as he writes in the poem "An Epitah". The total mood of the poems is that of depression, despondency, mockery, and exposing the shams of the life-style and value-system of the modern man.

. . . BULLETS RUN HOLES THROUGH BODIES . . .

In a poem like "A Terrorist Victim and His God", the poet hits at the routine and stereotyped concepts of worshipping the pot-bellied God who is created by man and made to sit as a show-piece in the "dark niche" and "murky dungeon" of the temple. He is worshipped and believed to be the saviour of his devotees; but actually this God sits "unmoved" with "an eternal smirk on his lips", and does nothing, rather cannot do anything, to save the lives of innocent believers who fall victims to the bullets of the terrorists and look for help towards him. Even then, the foolish mortals, as the poet calls them, believe in his kindness and call his ways "inscrutable", and merrily go on worshipping him. The foolishness of the human beings is very ironically exposed and assailed who, instead of reacting to the man caused atrocities and cruelities, accept these things coolly and merrily as 'directives' of God. This indeed is a shame on the human beings.

With a heavy heart, the poet also reveals that

> Every day
> bullets run holes
> through bodies,
> the reason for which
> the bodies do not know.

But we have become so "unconcerned", about the news of "brutalities", "bullets", "rapes", "battles", "cold-blooded murders" and "hangings", that we "sip" such "news/with morning tea/and splutter/vain platitudes"; and "move on" with the daily chores of life without getting touched and moved by such things.

Instead of being concerned and raising a cry of revolt against the excesses done by "man on man", we who claim to be of "supreme intelligence", express our inability to do anything against the "flowing blood", "burning fires" and "tightened noose". Rather, like inert creatures, we keep on waiting for "an ever elusive Messiah" to come to redeem us; and meanwhile accept every cruelty "merrily" as a thing "pre-destined".

The poet deserves credit for writing about such a sensitive issue of our times The reader is made to assess the situation himself and react sensitively and critically to what is happening around.

The poem, "The Squeezing Hands", touchingly conveys how a rich man is "uncaring" and dumb to the pleadings of the poor man who, with his folded hands, continuously makes appeals.

BEYOND THE DOOR

In some poems, the poet talks of the charm and illusion of the period of courtship and love, which generates an illusory faith in the lovers, but why the complications "Beyond the door", lead to "the din/ that churns/the cauldron/of Inter faith feud ?"–he can't answer. There is incompatibility in married life where two shadows "roam in the room", whose flesh has met but not the heart, when neither of them

> ever try
> to call back the heart
> that might, just might
> light a flicker
> in our waning flesh.

This "Love and Faith Feud" and "unfulfilled" love and so many other reasons, leave the poet's heart "lost", "dry" and "arid", and he finds himself very lonely and desperate

TOMORROW NEVER COMES

Poems like "Journey to Tomorrow" and ". . .Into the Land of Riper Years" convey the eternal, non-stop process of life, where 'yesterday' speedily turns into 'today', but where 'tomorrow' never comes and every moment passed becomes 'dead yesterday'. In this journey of life, each one of us has to live "a living death", "committing suicide bit by bit", but still never dying This is what the poet has discovered. The poet is also very conscious of the span of life he has spent so fast, fruitlessly. Now in his forties, which he calls "the riper years of his life", he feels himself sans "strong desires" and where strong feelings/cannot gush forth/in an exuberant spring.

HIS OTHER LAMENTS

No doubt, the hand, the eyes, the ears, the heart, the desire, and even the man is the same; but as he has lost youth, the touch, the sight, the sound, the feeling and the fire are not the same. This loss of youth and the appearance of dull "greyness" has made him more depressed and marred his "pink" and "silver face".

Another powerful strain in his poem "Lament of a Public School Teacher" is the expression of sickness of teaching literature to the insensitive, unresponsive and "infertile imaginations" of the "unreceiving crowd". The soul of the poet feels sick "under the dead weight of daily chores", to carry on this burden of teaching Shakespeare.

In the poem "the Moon, the Flower and I. . .", the poet very delicately hints how the jarring music of the

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FARM SIZE & PRODUCTIVITY IN INDIAN AGRICULTURE

A Review of the Debate by Invinder Paul Singh and Sunita Verma

The relationship of farm size and productivity has been debated in India since the farm management surveys (FMS—henceforth) were first undertaken in the fifties. Economists have not yet reached a unanimous conclusion. Some argue in favour of a negative relationship, some in favour of positive; and still others fail to observe any significant relationship at all.

The debate started from the observation that land productivity on small farms was higher than on large farms. This observation was called the 'Inverse hypotheses' and a number of studies attempted to explain the inverse relationship. These studies are based mostly on data for the pre-High Yielding Variety (HYV) period, though a few studies have been made in post-HYV period.

Since 1965, many important changes in farm technology have been brought about by the 'Green Revolution' which had a direct impact on this relationship. According to some economists,this has led to change in size-productivity relationship. In some cases, it has become positive with the introduction of new technology, while in others, it is no longer a well-etablished relationship. In the late sixties, it was found that inverse relationship was weaker in the more advanced Intensive Agricultural District Programme (IADP) areas than in more backward areas.

FARM MANAGEMENT STUDIES FROM 7 STATES

Khusro (1964) analysed the data obtained from studies in the Economics of Farm Management conducted under auspices of the Government of India in two districts of each of seven States. He concluded that : (i) if acreage be taken at its (uncorrected) face value, then, as acreage increases, gross output per acre (O/A) decreases;

(ii) with an increase in (uncorrected) acreage, the farm business income per acre decreases, though at a slower rate than O/A;

(iii) with an increase in (uncorrected) acreage, net profits per acre (P/A) increase and,though frequently negative in the smallest farms, rise to positive but by small values in all cases;

(iv) as farm acreage increases, the average quality of soil generally decreases and this is seen in the decline in land revenue per acre in almost all States;

(v) if acreage is corrected with an index of fertility (which can be land revenue per acre itself), the gross output per corrected acre remains constant as farm size increases;

(vi) farm business income per corrected acre generally remains constant with an expansion of farm size;

(vii) net profits per corrected acre, though negative in few cases, generally increase with an expansion of the farm size;

(viii) an alternative study of efficiency and farm size can be conducted with efficieney by output itself. This reveals. in all areas studied, a remarkable constancy of CP/O as output increases. The impression of constant returns to scale is quite strong.

INPUT-OUTPUT DATA FROM BOMBAY & A.P.

Rao (1965) studied the behaviour of inputs and output per acre with increase in farm size and also tested the hypothesis concerning productivity behaviour on the basis of individual farm data relating to Bombay and Andhra Pradesh He found that regression coefficients with respect to farm size are positive and less than one. They are significant at one per cent level, and are significantly different from unity indicating diminishing returns to land size. These results agree with the findings of farm management studies arrived at, on basis of grouped data, that output per acre declines with increase in the size of the holding.

A DIFFERENT FINDING

However, some of the studies conducted in the post –Green Revolution period did not agree with the inverse relationship between farm size and producti-

(Continued overleaf)

Laments of A Sad Soul *(Contd.)*

"Abba Songs" in the cities disturbs and interrupts his communication with the objects of Nature. Man himself is also the tormentor and destroyer of the beauty of Nature.

Some poems are very good for their rhyme and rhythm like "A Love Poem", but their content is meagre and too stereotyped, as in the poem, "I am Because".

Overall, the poet discovers outward and inward darkness, with treachery, hypocrisy and disharmony prevailing around. He laments for the lost values which he himself retains, and wishes these to be restored in the people.

In this first volume of verse, Chandak Chatterji has made a good attempt to bring out some issues of perennial relevance and concerning the current times, though at places too flatly. Poems like "Some of Us Wait" and "Journey to Tomorrow" can be rated among his better poems. The images, examples and phrases are well chosen, and coined, *e g.*, "shame-red", "cadaverous truth", "arid heart", "soundladen darkness" to express the thoughts and feelings effectively. Many of the poems are very subjective with the poet's "I" or "My" being too prominent, but the experiences narrated and communicated are general. One hopes that the notes of excessive gloom, aridity, greyness, inertness and darkness would be overcome, and things seen more objectively by the poet in his next volume of verse. After all, it is not so dark around.

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vity, For instance, Chattopadhyaya and Rudra (1976) presented a set of eighteen graphs representing the pattern of dependence of yield per acre in value terms of all the crops taken together in different States and districts and at different time-points, from farm management reports,with the primary purpose of illustrating certain arguments, that "there is no such universal law of productivity declining over size of the farms". Another important point illustrated is that such a tendency might operate over certain size-ranges, but not over all sizes from zero to infinity, as is suggested by the protagonists of the law of inverse relationship.

IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY—VARIOUS STUDIES

A number of micro economic studies were reviewed by Rao (1976). These showed that the inverse relationship under traditional technologies did not seem to hold when new technologies were introduced. He concluded that under impact of new technologies, the larger farms were experiencing a faster growth of output than small and marginal farms.

Khan (1977) tested two hypotheses : first, that there is an inverse relationship between land productivity and farm size; second, that there are no economies of scale in agricultural production. The tests were performed by regression analysis on farm level data collected in 1974. The hypothesis on economies of scale was confirmed, but results were not so conclusive about inverse relationship between land productivity and farm size.

By making analysis of three years, i.e. 1968-69 to 1970-71 using NCAER data, Bhalla (1979) reported that although the inverse relationship still persisted, it has weakened with time.

Ghose (1979) sought to assess the significance of the celebrated inverse relationship between farm size and land productivity in context of Indian agriculture. It is argued that inverse relationship does not reflect a superiority of peasant production over wage-labour based production, as is often supposed. It exists independently of production relations and thus reflects only a static superiority of small-scale over large-scale production. An essential precondition for this superiority, however, is backwardness of technology. With technological progress involving the introduction of chemical fertilizers, labour-saving machinery and modern irrigation equipments, the inverse relationship is, therefore, likely to disappear.

ROLE OF THE SUPPORT SYSTEM

By gathering data in 1970-71 from 272 Districts in India, Deolalikar (1981) attempted to study the effect of HYV's on productivity among different sized farms, taking fertilizers as a proxy for HYVs usage. His study showed that at zero level of fertilizer use, the smallest two groups of farm size had significantly higher productivity per hectare than medium and large farms. At higher levels of technology (fertilizer use), large farms were more productive than medium farms, which in turn, were more productive than small farms. Though each size group showed higher productivity at higher levels of technology, the productivity-size relationship had changed. The productivity advantage of small farms diminished and, in fact, even reversed with technical changes.

The explanation clearly lies in the reduced importance of labour and increased importance of cash inputs which, being capital-intensive, are less readily available to the small farmers. The reason why such a reversal or weakening of inverse relationship seems to be taking place, can be explained by the fact that new technologies require a supporting system of adequate irrigation and machinery, which in turn, require adequate credit facilities. These facilities are not necessarily scale-neutral. Most probably, they are more advantageous to large-sized farms.The traditional advantage of better irrigation on small farms has been offset by investments in tubewells on large farms, while labour intensity has been offset by cash–intensive inputs.

BIOLOGICAL & MECHANICAL CHANGES

Kallianpur (1984) conducted a study which quantifies biological and mechanical changes in agriculture. The coefficients of these technologies are quantified for wheat and rice in three countries, *viz.* USA, Japan and India, on the basis of time-series data, as well as for cross-sectional data on wheat in Punjab farms (for India). The estimates obtained by indirect least squares from different data sets and countries are consistent with each other, and fall within the range of results obtained by others, using different formulations. The study provided evidence on the hypothesis that farm size and productivity are inversely related. It raises questions about relative importance of the two technologies.

STUDY IN PAKISTAN . . .

Chaudhary *et al.* (1985) studied the size–productivity relationship in Pakistan, as it existed during the 1970's in the wake of the green revolution. The principal conclusion of the study was that the traditional inverse relationship between farm size and productivity still existed, precluding the possibility of positive relationship between farm size and productivity. The analysis indicated that the rate of growth of productivity during the 1970's was somewhat greater for small farmers than for large farmers. The causes of traditional inverse relationship remaining intact are: higher labour input, more intensive land use, greater fertilizer application, higher rates of adoption of HYVs and greater irrigated areas of the small farmers.

. . . AND ELSEWHERE

By analysing relationship between factor inputs, land yields and labour productivity for farms of different size on the basis of FAO Farm Management Data for 15 developing countries, Cornia (1985) concluded that for all but three countries, a strong negative

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IN INDIAN AGRICULTURE

correlation was found between farm size on one hand and factor inputs and yields per hectare on the other. The fitting of unconstrained production functions to the above data suggested that, in only few cases, the decline in yields for increasing farm size could be attributed to decreasing returns to scale. The higher yields observed on small farms were mainly to be ascribed to higher factor inputs and to a more intensive use of land.

DROUGHT-PRONE AREAS IN A.P.

Nagaraja and Bathaiah (1985) conducted a study which examined relationship between farm size and (1) percentage of irrigated area; (2) cropping intensity; (3) yield per acre and (4) farm business income. Data used was taken from an evaluation of a Drought Prone Area Project in Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh. The hypothesis tested was that the increase in agricultural productivity yields and incomes that has occurred in recent years, was the result of adoption of new technology (HYV's, irrigation etc.). Results indicated that a positive relationship existed between farm size and irrigated area in respect of new technology beneficiaries. In case of non-beneficiaries, there existed an inverse-relationship between average size of the holding and percentage of irrigated area A positive relationship between farm size and yield, and farm size and income, in both groups, was also identified. An inconsistent trend was found in the relationship of farm size to cropping intensity for non-beneficiaries, and a negative trend was observed in case of beneficiaries, *i e* as farm size increases, cropping intensity decreases. These results were, however, not statistically significant.

TRADITIONAL *Vs.* NEW TECHNOLOGY IN WEST BENGAL

Ghosh (1986) attempted to test Reversal of Inverse Relationship (RIR) hypothesis by comparing the relationship for all crop production as well as that for individual crops under traditional technology in the mid-1950's with that under new technology in the early 1970's in Hooghly district (West Bengal). The results indicated the statistical validity of the RIR hypothesis for this region Two reasons were offered to explain RIR hypothesis : (1) Superior production techniques used by large farms, and (2) Use of more material inputs per hectare by large farmers than by small farmers. The direct relationship between value of material inputs per hectare and farm size is generally established, particularly for crops undergoing technical change. The inverse relationship between value of material inputs per acre/hectare and farm size that existed in the pre-technical change period was seen to be reversed in the post-technical change period.

Thus, on the basis of a review of the above-mentioned studies, we may conclude that in a majority of studies,an inverse relationship between farm size and productivity which held true in the *pre*-Green Revolution period is now giving way to a positive relationship under the impact of new technology.

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As we get ready to greet the New Year, May we urge our readers, especially Young Scholars and Researchers, to contribute their book reviews and research findings to these columns. —Ed.

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YOUNG SCHOLARS SECTION

A SEARCH FOR HAPPINESS

Romen Basu : CANDLES AND ROSES
Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi (1978 Pp 204, Rs. 40.

Review by Sunita Jakhar

The backdrop of this 1978 novel was Paris, the city of glamour, against which were placed three characters, Samir, the protagonist, Pramila, his wife and Monique, his girl - friend. Superficially, the novel might appear as a love triangle, with Samir oscillating between Monique and Pramila, but if one delves deeper in the book, it is not only romantic love and marriage encounters between the characters, but at another level, a conflict between the cultures and ideologies of East and west. Gradually and softly, as the story moves ahead, the eastern ideology symbolised by Pramila in particular, prevails over the western ideology symbolised by Monique.

The novel bears the marks of a mature writer as he has dealt with the life experiences and dilemmas of the hero, a Bengali youth in early thirties, finding his feet in the strange land of Paris, with extreme adeptness The characters, too, are mature age-wise, they are not callow young persons. One wonders, if this was an autobiographical novel.

Romen Basu has been a highly placed U N. official for more than three decades. His stay abroad in close contact with the people of the west makes the novel appear life-like, when he describes the west. In this novel, he has mentioned minute details like delicacies and delights of life, and sights of every nook and corner of Paris so accurately that one begins to see the glimpses of Paris come alive before one's eyes. He also reveals his scientific temperament when he speaks precisely of the temperature (70° on page 1). Even in this early effort which came after 5 other works, he comes out as a talented writer who could take the credit of painting the cultures of East and West realistically.

Romen Basu has proved to be a master of character delineation. He has described his women characters very well, be they Indian on French Pramila is a typically Indian girl-shy, docile, pious, sacrificing, and she holds her husband in high esteem. Monique is a Parisian with her clothes and hairstyles always up-to-date; she is broadminded and confident. The main characters hail from the upper class social groups—Monique with a bourgeious background; Samir too spends lavishly in contrast with the Yugoslav lover of Monique. The novel speaks enough about Pramila's affluent ba:kground.

The obvious contrast between East and West runs through the novel. The title itself bears out such a contrast. 'Candles' are symbolic of the earthen lamps that the Hindus light while praying, and 'Roses' are symbolic of the west and of course, lead us to the florist-shop where Monique used to sit

The novel can be roughly divided into three parts or phases of the affairs of the heart. From beginning till chapter 14, it runs smoothly and can be labelled as the 'courtship period' of Monique and Samir From chapter 15 onwards, events start to gain momentum. Complexes crop up and a kind of tension builds up, which continues roughly till chapter 25. From there on,tension begins to clear up, and in the end, the characters harmonise and adjust themselves. They all fit into the roles they were—are most suited for. The last chapter —the woman to woman talk between Monique and Pramila—can be an eye-opener, at least for the women of the west, as it discloses the Indian secret of keeping the family united.

As the story unfolds itself, there are many sub-themes at various levels. At one level, the novel touches upon the social theme of dowry. It is a common practice in India that educated, sophisticated youngmen get married for the sake of dowry. Though it sounds disgusting, but it is a reality of millions of homes, and the evil has gone too deep to be easily eradicated. At another level, the author has touched upon 'the beauty of the soul'. This is illustrated well in the novel Though Monique is very beautiful and sophiticated as compared to Pramila, but there is 'something extra' in Pramila, which is not visible apparently. It keeps on attracting Samir, and he is not ready to lose her for Monique. At many places, the author dabbles in the forest of Indian philosophy and uses Samir as the mouthpiece of illustrating it. The attempt is not forced or artificial, as the occasion and settings arise naturally.

The novel is quite rich in the passions of love, hate, envy, suffering; and every character takes his or her share of these elements, turn by turn, as a rule of nature.

The language of the novel has an even and easy flow, laced with a tinge of French and Bengali, a testimony to the writer's polyglotism and being at ease with both the mediums.

All in all, I can say that reading the novel has been an enthralling and captivating experience for me, from beginning to end. It has revealed for me the charms of Paris, when the city and those several characters were young and romance was in the air.

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[Another instalment from the Prison Notebook of Bhagat Singh]

THE MARTYR'S NOTEBOOK

Page 49 (46)

*Marseillaise –**

Ye sons of toil, awake to glory !
Hark, hark, what myriads bid you rise;
Your children, wives and grand sires hoary,
Behold their tears and hear their cries !
Shall hateful tyrants mischief breeding,
With hireling hosts, a ruffian band—
Affright and desolate the land
While peace and liberty lie bleeding ?

[Chorus]

To arms, to arms ! Ye brave !
The avenging sword unsheathe
March on, march on, all hearts resolved.
On Victory or death.

With luxury and pride unsounded,
To vile insatiate despots dare,
Their thirst for gold and power unbounded
To meet and vend the light and air;
Like beasts of burden would they load us,
Like gods would bid their slaves adore,
But man is man and who is more ?
Then shall they longer last and goad us ?

[The same Chorus again]

Oh liberty ! Can man resign thee,
Once having felt thy generous flame ?
Can dungeons bolts and bars confine thee,
Or whips thy noble spirit tame ?
Too long the world has wept bewailing,
That falsehood, daggers tyrants' wield;
But freedom is our sword and shield,
And all their arts are unavailing ?

[*Same Chorus again*]

*[*La Marseillaise*—The French National Anthem—composed/improvised by Claude Joseph Rouget de Lisle, French Captain of engineers and a musical amateur, on April 24, 1792, in response to a call by the Mayor of Strasbourg for a patriotic song. It was adopted and sung with enthusiam by troops on their march from Marseille to Paris. —Eds.)

Page 50 (47)

Growth of Opportunism

It was the possibility of acting within law that reared opportunism within the labour parties of the period of Second Internationale.

(Lenin vide Collapse of II Int. N.)@

@[Vladimir Ilych Lenin, originally Ulyovov (1870-1924) Russian Revolutionary Bolshevik leader who, returning from exile in Europe, led the overthrow of Kerensky's government (November 1917) and laid the foundation of the Soviet Union. —Eds.]

Illegal Work :

"In a country where the bourgeosie, or the counter revolutionary Social Democracy is in power, the Communist Party must learn to coordinate its legal work with illegal work, and the legal work must always be under the effective control of the illegal party."

Bukharin §

§[Nikolai Aleksandrovich Bukharin (1888-1938) Soviet political leader, a leading Marxist/Bolshevik theorist after Lenin. Executed during the Stalinist purges of the Communist Party. —Eds.]

Betrayal of II Int : N.'s Cause :

The vast organisation of socialism and labour were adjusted to such peace time activities, and when the crisis came, a number of the leaders and large portion of the masses were unable to adopt themselves to the new situation. . . . It is this inevitable development that accounts largely for the betrayal of II International.

Marx to Lenin. p. 140
*(Morris Hillquiet)**

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*"The Cynic's Word Book"*** (1906)

Ambrose Prierce writes :

"Grape shot *n.* An argument which the future is preparing in answer to the demands of American Socialism."

**[Identity and other details not available. —Eds.]

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Religion a supporter of the established order :

Slavery : In 1835, the General Assembly of the Presbytrain Church resolved that : "Slavery is recognised in both old and New Testaments, and is not condemned by the authority of God".

The Charleston Baptist Association issued the following in 1835 :

(Continued on next page)

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THE MARTYR'S NOTEBOOK

"The right of masters to dispose of the time of their slaves has been distinctly recognised by the Creator of all things who is surely at libertly to vest the right of property over any object whomsoever He pleases."

The Revd. E D. Simon, Doctor of Divinity, a professor in Methodist College of Virginia wrote :

"Extracts from Holy writ unequivocally assert the right of property in slaves, together with the usual incidents to that right The right to buy and sell is clearly stated Upon the whole, then whether we consult the Jewish policy instituted by God Himself, or the uniform opinion and practice of mankind in all ages, or the injuctions of the New Testament and the moral law, we are brought to the conclusion that slavery is not immoral. Having established the point that the first African slaves were legally bought into bondage, the right to detain their child in bondage follows as an indispensable consequence. Thus we see that the slavery that exists in America was founded in right."

Capitalism Supported : Henry Van Dyke* writes in "Essay in Application" (1905) :

"The Bible teaches that God owns the world. He distributes to every man according to His own Good pleasure, conformably to the general laws."

*[Further details not known. —Eds.]

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Statistics about United States :—

Army was 50,000 strong
It is now 300,000 strong.

Plutocracy owns 67 billions of wealth.
Out of the total persons engaged in occupation
only 9/10% belong to Plutocracy
Yet they own 70% of the total wealth.
Out of Persons engaged in occupations
29% belong to Middle Class
They own 25% of the total wealth = 24 billions
Remaining 70% of the men in occupations belong to the Proletariat and they only (have) 4% of the total wealth *i.e.* 4 billions.

According to Lucian Saniel, in 1900 :
Out of total people engaged in occupations
250,251 belonged to Plutocrats
" " = 8,429,845 to Middle Class
" " = 20,395,137 to Proletariat

(*Iron Heel*)***

Rifles :

"You say you will have majority in the Parliament and State offices, but "How many rifles have you got ? Do you know where you can get plenty of lead ? When it comes to powder, the chemical mixtures are better than mechanical mixtures. You take my word."

—*Iron Heel*** p. 198

***[Novel by Jack London, American novelist —Eds.]

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Power . . . [*part af the heading torn out*] -Eds.

A socialist leader had addressed a meeting of the plutocrats and charged them of mismanaging the society and thereby thrown the whole responsibility on their shoulders, the responsibility for the woes and misery that confronts the suffering humanity. Afterwards a capitalist (Mr. Wickson) rose and addressed him as follows :

"This, then, is our answer. We have no words to waste on you. When you reach out your vaunted strong hands for our palaces and purpled case, we will show you what strength is. In roar of shell and sharpnel and in whine of machine guns will our answer be couched. We will grind you revolutionists down under our heel, and we shall walk upon your faces. The world is ours. We are its lords and ours it shall remain. As for the host of labour, it has always been in the dirt since history began, and I read history aright. And in the dirt it shall remain so long as I and mine and those that come after us, have the power.

There is the word. It is the king of words—Power, Not God, not mammon but Power. Pour it over your tongue till it tingles with it. Power."

"I am answered." Earnest (the socialist lender) said quietly. "It is the only answer that could be given. Power. It is what we of the working class preach. We know, and well we know by bitter experience that, no appeal for the right, for justice, for humanity can ever touch you. Your hearts are hard as your heels with which you tread upon the faces of the poor. So we have preached power. By the Power of our ballots, on election day will we take your government away from you. . . ."

"What if you do get a majority, a sweeping majority on election day," Mr. Wickson broke in to demand. "Suppose we refuse to turn the Government over to you after you have captured it at the ballot box ?"

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"That also, have we considered," Earnest replied. "And we shall give you an answer in terms of lead.

(*Contd. next page inside cover*)

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